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REMAINS

HISTORICAL & LITERARY

CONNECTED WITH THE PALATINE COUNTIES OF

LANCASTER AND CHESTER

PUBLISHED BY

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VOL XV.

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M.DCCC.XLVIII.

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THE

HOLY LYFE AND HISTORY

OF

SAYNT WERBURGE

VERY FRUTEFULL

FOR ALL CHRISTEN PEOPLE TO REDE.

EDITED BY

EDWARD HAWKINS, ESQ.

PRINTED FOR THE CHETHAM SOCIETY.

M.DCCC.XLVIII.

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LONDON:
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INTRODUCTION.

A Society, established for the publication of historical and literary remains connected with the Palatine counties of Lancaster and Chester, could not fail to direct their early attention to the history of a person so illustrious by her birth, so reputed for the sanctity of her life, so memorable for her imputed miracles, and whose name is familiar to every inhabitant of these palatine counties as the patroness saint of the cathedral of the diocese. Amongst the earliest notices issued by the Society was an announcement of their intention to publish a reprint of Henry Bradshaw's Life and History of St. Werburgh from the very rare quarto of 1521, printed by Pynson. That intention is now fulfilled by the present volume, containing the poem of which "Harry Braddeshaa, of Chestre Abbay, monke," is partly author, partly translator.

In the "prologe of the translatour," as he calls himself, he says, p. 4.

> I purpose to wryte a legende good and true
> And translate a lyfe into Englysshe doubtles;

and at p. 26 gives an account of the work, which he purposes to translate.

> For as declareth, the true Passyonary
> A boke wherin, her holy lyfe wryten is
> Whiche boke remayneth, in Chester monastery

I purpose by helpe of Jhesu kynge of blys
In any wyse to reherse, any sentence amys
But folowe the legende, and true hystory
After an humble style, and from it lytell vary.

These variations, be they "lytell" or much, seem to be founded upon histories and chronicles, which have been published, and are accessible to all who choose to trace the authorities for some of these legendary notices.

Unto this rude werke, myne auctours these shalbe
Fyrst the true legende, and the venerable Bede
Mayster Alfrydus, and Wyllyam Malvysburye
Gyrarde Polycronycon, and other mo in deed. p. 5.

The "true legende" is doubtless the "true Passyonary" mentioned above, which is afterwards called the "thrid Passionary;"

And as the history, of her lyfe doth expresse
In a boke nominat, the thrid passionary; p. 120.

which also seems to have contained an account of more miracles than the translator was perhaps quite prepared to believe, or at least did not deem it quite expedient to publish at this time.

To expresse all myracles, written in the place
In a boke nominate, the thrid passionarye
It wolde require, a longe tyme and space
To the reders tedious, (no mervayle sothly)
Where we omytte, to writte of them specially
But touched in generall, unto your audience. p. 197.

The poem is preceded by a "Prologe in honour and laude

of Sainte Werburge and to the prayse of the translatour by J. T.," whose name and profession we have been as little able to ascertain as was Herbert, when he first noticed this work.

Of the main body of the poem then Bradshaw must be considered as a translator from a work,* in the Latin language, then remaining in the library of Chester monastery, called the true or third Passionary, inserting such additional matter as he was pleased to extract from the various chronicles which he mentions. He was however not merely a translator, but an author, for the " Prologes" to the first and second books, pp. 1 and 134, " A litell orison or prayer to the blessed virgine Saynte Werburge," p. 205, and the " breve conclusion," p. 207, are certainly original compositions of Bradshaw himself, and it is not improbable that he was also author of chapters 21 and 22, in the second book, being " A breve rehersall of the myracles of Saynt Werburge after her translacion to Chestre," and " A charitable

* The author of the original work here translated is not known, nor was Bradshaw himself acquainted with his name, for in " a Balade to the auctour," published with the translation the very year in which it was concluded, is mentioned (p. 210) that " uncertayne was his name."

Warton observes " a great translator of the lives of the Saxon Saints from the Saxon, in which language only they were then extant, into Latin, was Goscelinus, a monk of St. Austin at Canterbury, who passed from France into England about 1058. Among the rest were the lives of St. Werburgh, St. Ethelred and St. Sexburgh, most probably the legends which were Bradshaw's originals." This conjecture can scarcely be reconciled to the above assertion with regard to the original author, that " uncertayne was his name."

mocion and desyre to all the inhabytauntes within the Countie Palatine of Chestre for the monasterie."

The poem is written in stanzas of seven lines each, of which the first and third, the second, fourth and fifth, and the sixth and seventh, rhyme with each other. To this arrangement there are a few exceptions; at p. 153 is a stanza of eight lines, of which the first and third, the second, fourth, fifth and seventh, the sixth and eighth, rhyme with each other. At pp. 115, 116, 126, are three stanzas similarly arranged, in which three cases however the last line is Latin. Chapters 21, 22 and 23, and two balades at pp. 211 and 212 are all written in similar stanzas of eight lines.

Throughout the poem, in order to produce, in reading, anything of rythmical intonation, the accent must be laid strongly upon the very last syllable of the line, even in cases where, according to the modern mode of pronunciation, the last syllable is as little dwelt upon as possible. Every stanza affords instances of this intonation, and it is scarcely necessary to refer to any particular passages, but in p. 125, the following illustrations may be observed, — gostly and remedy, parte and trinite, odour, savour, hour; body, clergy, verily, &c. &c.

The Latin language was probably very familiar to our author, for the reader can scarcely fail to be struck with the frequent introduction of quaint Latinisms. At p. 150 we find "With grace circumfulced and lyghtned was England." In the same page he talks of faith enduring "without recidivation," and in p. 152, of faith being "remanent;" we find "promyttynge," p. 163, 166; "facundious," p. 209,

210 ; "desydery," 56, and several others may be discovered by consulting the glossary. The greater number of these words it will be perceived were derived directly from the Latin, but not unfrequently, as is most usual in writers of that age, the Latinisms appear to have been introduced under the influence of the French language upon our own, rather than directly from the Latin. At p. 153, he speaks of St. Alban's monastery being edified, from *edifier ;* p. 115, of this life being *caduce ;* p. 137, of the abbey of Chester envired with walles; baptism is written baptym, *baptime ;* convent, *covent ;* sautynge, from *assaut ;* and dygne of dutye, from *digne.* The termination of the past tense, derived from the Latin participle, is of almost universal occurrence, as maculate, preparate, coronate, nominat, tumulate, &c. &c.

At pp. 147, 158 and 179 are quotations from Henry of Huntingdon, which contain some errors ; it is as well therefore to reprint them here from Savile's edition of that author.

p. 147.

Nobilitas innata tibi probitatis honorem
Armipotens Alfrede dedit, probitasque laborem,
Perpetuumque labor nomen, cui mixta dolori
Gaudia semper erant ; spes semper mixta timori.
Si modo victor eras, ad crastina bella pavebas.
Si modo victus eras, ad crastina bella parabas.

Jam post transactos vitæ regnique dolores
Christus ei sit vera quies, sceptrumque perenne.

Henrici Huntingdoniensis, Hist. lib. v.

p. 158.

O Elfleda potens, O terror virgo virorum
Victrix naturæ, nomine digna viri.
Tu quo splendidior fieres, natura puellam,
Te probitas fecit nomen habere viri
Te mutare decet sed solam, nomina sexus,
Tu regina potens, rexque trophæa parans.
Jam nec Cæsarei tantum meruere triumphi
Cæsare splendidior virgo virago vale. *Ibid.*

p. 179.

Auctor opum, vindex scelerum, largitor honorum,
Sceptriger Edgarus regna superna petit.
Hic alter Salomon, legum pater, orbita pacis;
Quod caruit bellis claruit inde magis.
Templa Deo, templis monachos, monachis dedit agros
Nequitiæ lapsum, justitiæque locum. *Ibid.*

In the quotation from William of Malmsbury, p. 176, in the last line, for "a" read "de."

The first book of this poem contains an account of the descent of St. Werburge from four royal families, her character, the history of her life and those of some of her more immediate relations; it also relates the principal circumstances of her death and subsequent removal and condition of her body. The second book is chiefly devoted to the circumstances which connected her with the city of Chester, of which she was considered the patron saint. The author at p. 4 calls her prioress and lady of the Abbey of Chester: but she was never so, except under the general appointment of Ethelred, who made her (p. 85)

lady ruler and presydent
Over all the nonnes, of every monastery
Within his realme.

Ethelred indeed (p. 86)

Edyfyed a collage chyrche, notable and famous
In the subbarbes of Chester, pleasaunt and beauteous
In honour of God, and the Baptyst Saynt Johan,

but it does not appear that she had any authority in this establishment, and indeed this foundation had not any connexion with the Abbey of Chester.

It is probable that he calls her "Pryores" of the Abbey merely because she was enshrined there, and was considered the patroness saint of that monastery and city.

To this imputed patronage of the city and its religious establishments we doubtless owe the existence of this poem; for when the translator felt that as "a relygyous man, losynge of tyme could not him excuse, and that for avoiding such great folyshenes he ressolved

Some small treatyse to wryte brevely" p. 4.

there can be little doubt that he was led to the choice of his subject from a desire to do honour to

Blessed vyrgyn Werburge, my holy patronesse, p. 5.

indeed he acknowledges as much in his "breve conclusion,"

The cause movyng us, this werke to begyn
It was to avoyde, slouth and idelnes
And most for the love, of this holy virgin
Whiche is our sufferayn lady and patrones. p. 209.

The reader will probably not be displeased that this poem should be accompanied by Warton's criticisms and estimate of its character, which are, therefore, here quoted at length.

"Henry Bradshaw has rather larger pretensions to poetical fame than William of Nassington, although scarcely deserving the name of an original writer in any respect. Before the year 1500 he wrote the Life of St. Werburge, a daughter of a King of the Mercians, in English verse. This poem, beside the devout deeds and passion of the poet's patroness saint, comprehends a variety of other subjects; as a description of the kingdom of the Mercians, the lives of Saint Ethelred and Saint Werburge, the foundation of the city of Chester and a chronicle of our Kings. It is collected from Bede, Alfred of Beverley, Malmesbury, Gerardus Cambrensis, Higden's Polychronicon, and the Passionaries of the female Saints Werburgh, Ethelred and Sexburgh, which were kept for public edification in the choir of our poet's monastery. Bradshaw is not so fond of relating visions and miracles as his argument seems to promise. Although concerned with three saints, he deals more in plain facts than in the fictions of religious romance; and, on the whole, his performance is rather historical than legendary. This is remarkable in an age when it was the fashion to turn history into legend.

"His fabulous origin of Chester is not so much to be imputed to his own want of veracity as to the authority of his voucher, Ranulph Higden, a celebrated chronicler, his countryman, and a monk of his own abbey. He supposes

that Chester, called by the ancient Britons Caer Lleon, or, the city of legions was founded by Leon gaur, a giant, corrupted from Leon vaur, a great legion.

> The founder of Chestre, as sayth Policronicon
> Was Lleon Gauer, a myghty stronge gyaunt
> Whiche buylded caves, and dongions many one
> No goodly buyldyng, propre ne pleasaunt — p. 148.

he adds with equal attention to etymology,

> But the Kynge Leil, a Briton sure and valiaunt
> Was founder of Chestre, by pleasaunt buyldyng
> And of Caerleil, also named by the kynge. p. 148.

But a greater degree of credulity would perhaps have afforded him a better claim to the character of a poet; and, at least we should have conceived a more advantageous opinion of his imagination had he been less frugal of those traditionary fables, in which ignorance and superstition had clothed every head of his argument.

"The most splendid passage of this poem is the description of the feast (ch. xvi. pp. 58—65) made by King Wulfer in the Hall of the Abbey of Ely when his daughter Werburge was admitted to the veil in that monastery; among other curious anecdotes of ancient manners, the subjects of the tapestry with which the hall was hung, and of the songs sung by the minstrels on this solemn occasion, are given at large.

"If there be any merit of imagination or invention to which the poet has a claim in this description, it altogether consists in the application. The circumstances themselves

are faithfully copied by Bradshaw from what his own age actually presented. In this respect, I mean as a picture of ancient life, the passage is interesting, and for no other reason. The versification is infinitely inferior to Lydgate's worst manner.

"Bale, a violent reformer, observes that our poet was a person remarkably pious for the times in which he flourished. This is an indirect satire on the monks and on the period which preceded the Reformation. I believe it will readily be granted that our author had more piety than poetry. His prologe contains humble professions of his inability to treat lofty subjects and to please light readers."

Warton's remarks are too disparaging; Dibdin, who gives an extended account of the poem, forms a higher estimate of Bradshaw's merit. "It is presumed," he observes, "that his name will stand among the foremost in the list of the poets of the period wherein he wrote. His descriptions are oftentimes happy as well as minute; and there is a tone of moral purity and rational piety in his thoughts, enriched by the legendary lore of romance that renders many passages of his poem exceedingly interesting."

If it is not allowed to rank Bradshaw, according to Dibdin's estimate, among the foremost in the list of poets of his period, it is unjust to place him in so low a rank among his cotemporaries as the severity of Warton seems to demand. There is a tone of moral principle and devotional piety so unaffectedly pervading the whole volume, and so easily and naturally introduced, as to impress the reader with the conviction that they had an

habitual influence upon his mind and heart, and exhibited themselves without an effort and almost unconsciously in all his expressions. There is much strength and apparent sincerity in his numerous exhortations to piety and devotion. In his "charitable mocion," (ch. xxii. p. 199 et seq.) he urges his readers to benevolence and to the support of the monastery, with great power, and sets before them every variety of motive that could be supposed to influence persons under the peculiar circumstances in which each might be placed. He appeals to the piety of their forefathers, and endeavours to work upon all their passions, affections and emotions, upon their love and fear, gratitude and duty. His familiarity with the Latin langnage has been already noticed, and the reader can scarcely have failed to observe his intimate acquaintance with the sacred writings, numerous scripture personages are adduced as models and examples of the various virtues, which adorn the christian character; and the language of scripture is constantly apparent in his exhortations and descriptions, especially where the character and acts of St. Werburge are his subjects. Moral maxims and proverbs, the concentrated wisdom of ages, seem to have been familiar to him, and may be detected in many of his pages. If

> Manners maketh man
> Quoth William of Wykeham,

Bradshaw observes,

> by a proverbe certan
> Good maners and conynge maken a man, p. 134.

another of his proverbs is worth pointing out, as it exem-

plifies the use of the word "lad" to signify a person of low degree,

by a proverb auncyent
A lad to wedde a lady is an inconvenyent. p. 38.

The sententious brevity of a proverb is sometimes lost and weakened by adapting it to the metre of his poem; Man proposes, God disposes, is expanded into

Tho mankynde prepose his mynde to fulfyll
Yet God dysposeth all thynge at his wyll. p. 119.

The remark of Warton is probably just, that had he had a greater degree of credulity he would have had a greater chance of being poetical; credulity indeed does not seem to be his failing, for though he records many miracles of St. Werburge and with some appearance of belief in their reality, it is quite clear that he omits many marvellous tales, which might have been supplied by the original work, but which would be to the "reders tedious (no mervayle sothly)," and to which he was not himself quite prepared to give full credit. It is true that he gives more, many more, than sufficient to satisfy any modern readers; but the Reformation was approaching, the shadows of coming events were already apparent, and were exerting their almost unobserved influence upon the feelings and opinions of the people, and Bradshaw had evidently less faith in the miraculous legends of his monastery, than had been enjoyed by his predecessors; in truth there appears to be occasionally a lurking humour in his description, which betrays as much disbelief in his own narrative, as the temper of the times, and the still lingering credulity of his cotemporaries would permit. If his

own good sense and the growing enfranchisement of the period from the bondage of superstition, and papal impositions, checked in him any tendency to imaginative flights and poetic paroxysms; it will not be denied that he frequently exhibits considerable strength of expression in his language, and great powers in his vivid and graphic descriptions. A goodly specimen of railing may be found in Book I. ch. x. where St. Ermenylde, St. Werburge and her brothers severely rebuke Werbode for his "grevous presumpcyon" in aspiring to the hand of St. Werburge. Many of the miraculous cures are described with great force; and it will be difficult to find, in any cotemporary author, so lively, picturesque and humorous a narrative as that of the unhappy geese of Wedon

> who went
> Mekely as yf they had reason naturall
> Unto her presence,

and with

> Theyr wynges traylynge entred into the hall. p. 98, 99.

Had his merits as a writer been less than they really are, his meek and humble apology for his defects, which he puts forth in his "breve conclusion," would deprecate all severity of criticism. He had clearly not a musical ear, his versification is not smooth and harmonious, and his naturally defective appreciation of rythmical intonation has been much exaggerated by the awkward and difficult arrangement of the stanza which he has adopted. With an easier metre his lines might have flowed with more ease and grace, and would have better conciliated the favour of his readers.

Rugged however and harsh as his verse may be, and low as may be the estimation of Bradshaw as a poet, the amiable and pious tone of the whole poem cannot but impress the mind with agreeable feelings, and excite admiration and affection towards him as a man and a christian.

Of Henry Bradsha, Braddshaa or Bradshaw, who calls himself, p. 3, "a religious man," *i. e.* an ecclesiastic, nothing more is known than what is recorded by Anthony Wood, who says, "he was born in the auncient town of Westchester, commonly called the city of Chester, and being much addicted to religion and learning, when a youth, was received among the Benedictine monks of St. Werburgh's monastery in the said city. Thence at riper years he was sent to Gloucester college in the suburb of Oxon, where after he had passed his course in theology among the novices of his order he returned to his cell at St. Werburge and in his elder years wrote, *De antiquitate et magnificentia urbis Cestriæ chronicon, etc.* and translated from Latin into English a book which he thus entitled, *The life of the glorious Virgin St. Werburge: Also many miracles that God had shewed for her.* London, 1521, 4to. He died in fifteen hundred and thirteen (5 Henry 8) and was buried in his monastery, leaving then behind him other matters to posterity, but the subject of which they treat I know not."—Athen. Oxon. edit. by Dr. Bliss, v. I. p. 18.

The date of his death is expressly stated in "A balade to the auctor," which is appended to the poem, by some unknown friend, and, probably, monk of the same monastery.

He laments the death of Bradshaw,

> a floure most riall
> Redolent in cronicles with historicall syght
> Whiche nowe is departed from this temporall lyght
> The present yere of this translacion
> M.D.XIII. of Christis incarnacion
> Cujus anime propicietur deus. p. 210.

Of the works of Bradshaw above mentioned or alluded to, that "De antiquitate et magnificentia," etc., nothing is now known, but it is not improbable that some fragments dispersed in various MSS. descriptive of this city may have been extracted from his chronicle. The life of the glorious virgin St. Werburge is the work which is here reprinted. Of the "other matters to posterity" nothing more is positively known to us than to Wood, but Mr. Herbert was in possession of a poem, "The lyfe of St. Radegunde," also printed by Pynson, of which he says, "although the name of the author or translator of this book does not decidedly appear on the face of it, yet on comparing it with the Life of St. Werburge it may readily be perceived that both were penned by the same person, Henry Bradshaw; but hitherto omitted in every list of his works." Typographical Antiquities, p. 294.

Mr Cowper in his Summary of the life of St. Werburgh quotes more than once the Latin life of this lady by Bradshaw, and these extracts he derives from Leland's Collectanea, but where this collector discovered his original authority does not appear. Mr. Cowper is probably mistaken in ascribing the work to Bradshaw's own pen; it is much more probable

that the extracts are derived from the original chronicle or passionary, which Bradshaw translated into English verse, for he has himself distinctly stated that his poem was a translation from a Latin history preserved in his monastery; he gives no intimation of his having written it himself, and it is also stated that the name of the original author was unknown.

Although this work is of very great rarity, it is not so much so as was at one time supposed. The earliest mention of the book, which we have discovered, is by Maittaire, who in 1741 inserts it in a list of books not before noticed. In 1749, Ames in his Typographical Antiquities, mentions the work, and so describes it as to leave no doubt of his having had a copy before him. Notwithstanding all this, Dr. Foote Gower in his "Sketch of Materials for the History of Cheshire" in 1771, doubts the existence of such a printed volume; and in a subsequent advertisement, arguing upon the evidence for and against the existence of such a work, adds "no possible enquiries of mine have been able to discover the least trace of it, in any private as well as in any public repository," and closes the difficulty with the good humoured expression of Sir Roger de Coverly, "that much may be said on both sides."

There are, however, at least five copies in existence; one is in the Minster Library at York, and my kind friend Mr. Davies informs me that it is in modern binding, that it is imperfect at the beginning, wanting the first 22 pages, the first present leaf being C. 1. on page 23, that it is otherwise

clean and in good preservation. It once belonged to Dr. Marmaduke Fothergill, and in the margin of one of the leaves near the close of the book, appears the name of Gervas Clifton, to whom it had at one time probably belonged.

Two copies are in the Bodleian Library at Oxford, one of which had been purchased at Warwick, July 2, 1730, by Mr. West, at the sale of whose books in 1773, it was bought by Mr. Gough, for £2. 15*s.* and with the other treasures of his collection now reposes in the Bodleian.

The other copy belonging to the same library bears the autographs of former owners "Wylliã. Watson," and "Richard Cartwright," "Homfree," "William Peate," "John, and Mary Seres," and on one margin appears "John . . (cut off.)

So God me save he is a loute
I put you all out of doute
By me John Beade, draper."

It was subsequently the property of Selden, from whom it passed to the Bodleian.

A fourth copy is in the British Museum. In the sale catalogue of the books of Mr. Marten of Palgrave, in lot 196, was a Life of St. Werburgh, which is supposed to be the same copy which came into the Pearson Library, which was sold in 1788, (lot 2374 the Life of St. Werburgh) and was bought by Isaac Reed for £1. 3*s.* At his sale in 1807 it formed lot 6972, and was purchased by I. L., *i. e.* I. Lochee, the auctioneer in King Street, Covent Garden, for £18. He is supposed to have purchased it for Mr. Parke, the editor and enlarger of Walpole's Royal and Noble Authors, who

afterwards sold it for 28 guineas to Mr. Heber, who inserted in the volume the following note. "This book is of the first order of rarity, not being in the Royal, British Museum, Bodleian, Spencer, Hunter, Blenheim, or Blandford collections, indeed no other copy is known to exist in any repository public or private, except one in Mr. Heber's library. Mr. Heber paid 28 guineas to Mr. P— for his copy 10 years ago, a time when 5*s.* went further in the purchase of a scarce book than a pound sterling does now." This note upon a scrap of paper was probably intended as a communication to some friend, perhaps to Mr. Dibdin, and, after having been copied for that purpose, was pasted into the volume as it now appears. At Mr. Heber's sale in 1834 it was purchased for the British Museum for £19. 5*s.*

The fifth copy is probably the one stated by Herbert, in his edition of Ames' Typographical Antiquities, to have been then in his own possession, and which is supposed to have passed into the hands of Mr. Woodhouse, in whose sale in 1803 it was lot 859, and was sold to Mr. Hill, the prototype of Paul Pry, for £31. 10*s.* This gentleman's library, rich in early poetry, was sold to Messrs. Longman, and Co., and was the foundation of their "Bibliotheca Anglo-poetica," in which this book was priced £63., and sold to Mr. Midgely, whose library was brought to the hammer in 1818 at Messrs. Saunders, when this rare volume was purchased by Mr. Hibbert for £42. At this gentleman's sale it was purchased by Thorpe for £19. 10*s.*, from whom it passed to the library of Mr. Miller, the present possessor.

It may be remarked that this work is the earliest, in print, which refers to Hugh Lupus, Earl of Chester, and his dignity in the earldom, see pp. 181, 182. The passage was cited in an affidavit made in 1843 in "the Consistory Court of Chester," and appears in an Appendix to an appeal from "the Chancery Court of York, in the goods of Anne Rothwell Wignall, commonly called Anne Rothwell, Spinster, deceased, in the Judicial Committee of Her Majesty's most honourable Privy Council."

The errors in this reprint that may be chargeable to the press occur at

page 18, line 9, T *read* To,
page 94, line 10, ha *read* had,
page 99, line 15, conpassyon *read* compassyon,
and page 112, last line but one, Gorrupte *read* Corrupte;

but it is to be feared that some trifling errors in transcription, such as kingdome for kyndome, befound for befounde, us for vs, would be discovered by an accurate collation. Pynson is not uniform in the use of his i, his y, and the insertion or omission of the final e.

The collation of the book is thus: it commences with the Title-page and Wood-cut of St. Werburge, The prologe of J. T. and the Table of the boke, the second Title-page, with

the Wood-cut repeated and reiterated at the back, and then follows the Poem, commencing with signature **a** and ending on **g iiii.**, the reverse bearing Pynson's device.

a ii	containing	pages	1 to 14	k	„	„	111 to 118
b	„	„	15 — 22	l	„	„	119 — 134
c	„	„	23 — 38	m	„	„	135 — 142
d	„	„	39 — 46	n	„	„	143 — 158
e	„	„	47 — 62	o	„	„	159 — 166
f	„	„	63 — 70	p	„	„	167 — 182
g	„	„	71 — 86	q	„	„	183 — 190
h	„	„	87 — 94	r	„	„	191 — 206
i	„	„	95 — 110	s	„	„	207 — 214

A Glossary and Index are added.

The following genealogical tables are drawn up from the third chapter of the Poem, which professes to trace the descent of St. Werburge from four "Kynges of this lande, and of the riall blodde of Fraunce." Table V. has been compiled from the other four. They do not profess to be correct genealogies, nor has any attempt been made to reconcile the discrepancies which occur in various chronicles, nor even in this history. They are merely intended as aids to the reader by presenting to him, in a tabulur form, that which the author gives as narrative.

TABLE I.
"Regnum Merciæ ex parte patris." pp. 10, 11.

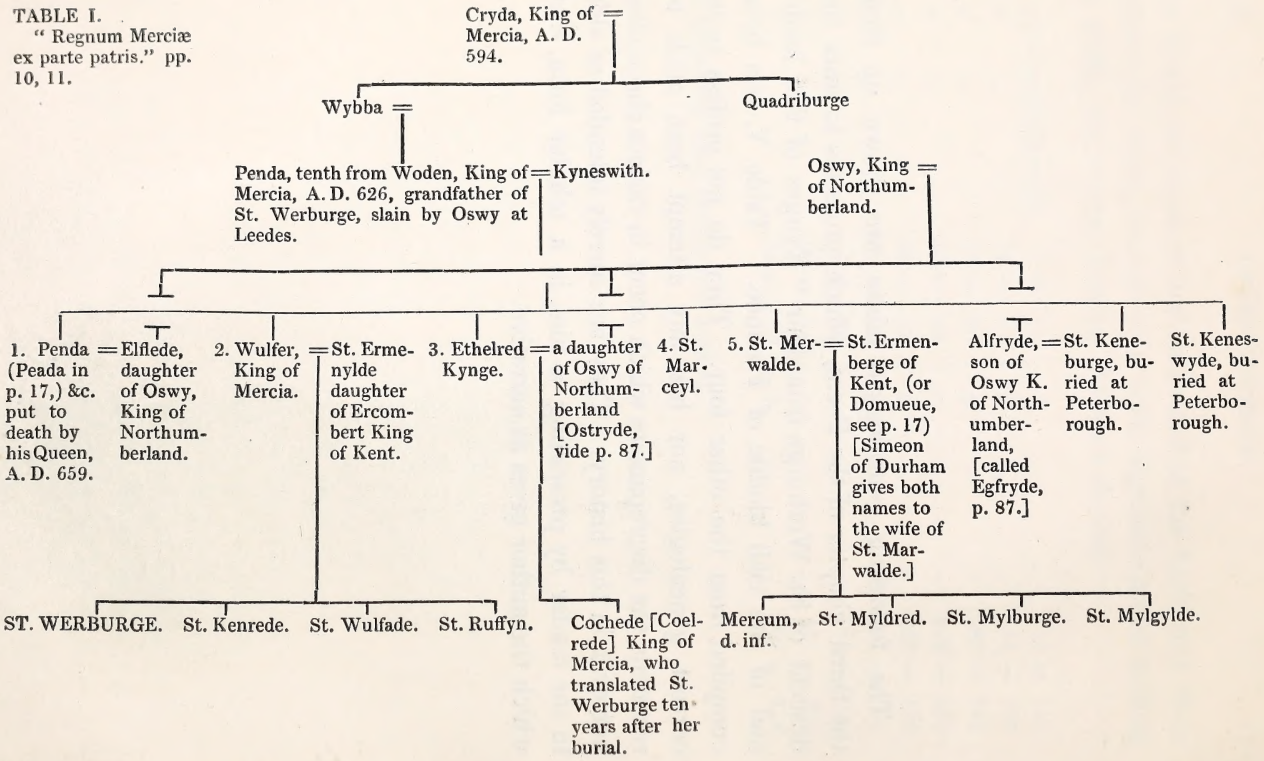
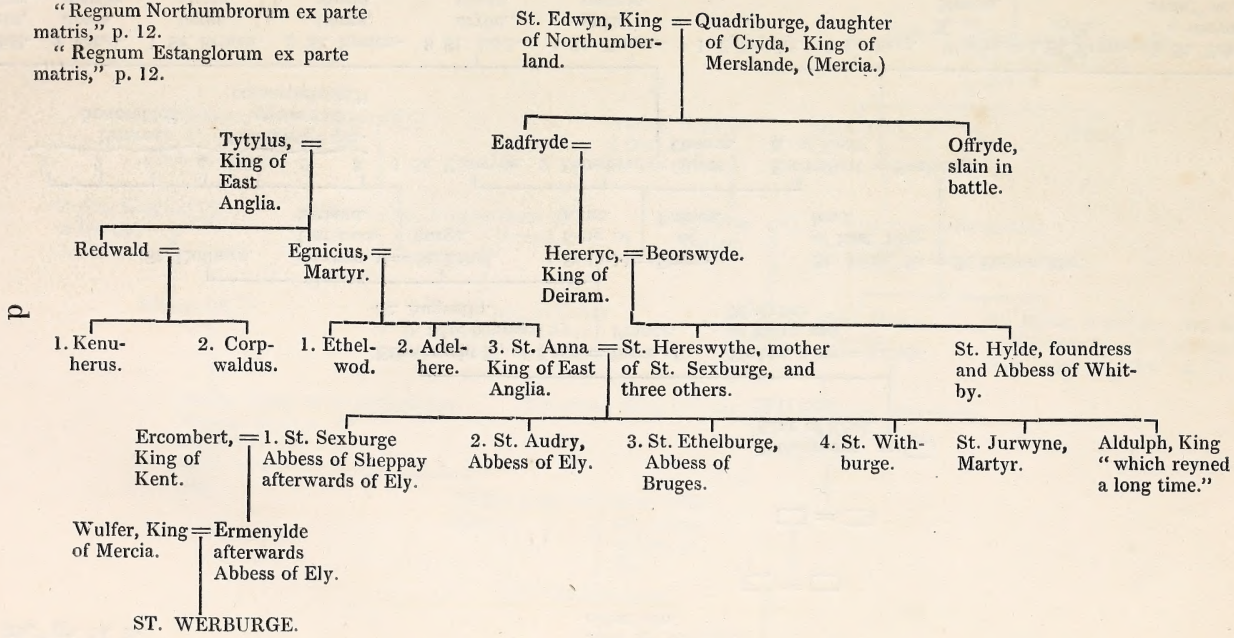

Cryda, King of Mercia, A. D. 594.
Wybba
Quadriburge
Penda, tenth from Woden, King of Mercia, A. D. 626, grandfather of St. Werburge, slain by Oswy at Leedes.
Kyneswith.
Oswy, King of Northumberland.
1. Penda (Peada in p. 17,) &c. put to death by his Queen, A. D. 659.
Elfiede, daughter of Oswy, King of Northumberland.
2. Wulfer, King of Mercia.
St. Ermenylde daughter of Ercombert King of Kent.
3. Ethelred Kynge.
a daughter of Oswy of Northumberland [Ostryde, vide p. 87.]
4. St. Marceyl.
5. St. Merwalde.
St. Ermenberge of Kent, (or Domueue, see p. 17) [Simeon of Durham gives both names to the wife of St. Marwalde.]
Alfryde, son of Oswy K. of Northumberland, [called Egfryde, p. 87.]
St. Keneburge, buried at Peterborough.
St. Keneswyde, buried at Peterborough.
ST. WERBURGE.
St. Kenrede.
St. Wulfade.
St. Ruffyn.
Cochede [Coelrede] King of Mercia, who translated St. Werburge ten years after her burial.
Mereum, d. inf.
St. Myldred.
St. Mylburge.
St. Mylgylde.

TABLE II. & III.

"Regnum Northumbrorum ex parte matris," p. 12.

"Regnum Estanglorum ex parte matris," p. 12.


St. Edwyn, King of Northumberland.
Quadriburge, daughter of Cryda, King of Merslande, (Mercia.)
Tytylus, King of East Anglia.
Eadfryde
Offryde, slain in battle.
Redwald
Egnicius, Martyr.
Hereryc, King of Deiram.
Beorswyde.
1. Kenuherus.
2. Corpwaldus.
1. Ethelwod.
2. Adelhere.
3. St. Anna King of East Anglia.
St. Hereswythe, mother of St. Sexburge, and three others.
St. Hylde, foundress and Abbess of Whitby.
Ercombert, King of Kent.
1. St. Sexburge Abbess of Sheppay afterwards of Ely.
2. St. Audry, Abbess of Ely.
3. St. Ethelburge, Abbess of Bruges.
4. St. Withburge.
St. Jurwyne, Martyr.
Aldulph, King "which reyned a long time."
Wulfer, King of Mercia.
Ermenylde afterwards Abbess of Ely.
ST. WERBURGE.

¶ Here begynneth the holy lyfe and hiſtory of ſaynt werburge / very frutefull for all chriſten people to rede.

¶ The prologe of J.T. in the honour & laude of saint Werburge / and to the prayse of ye translatour of the legende folowynge.

Honour / ioye / and glorie / the toynes organicall
Endeles myrthes wt melodies / prayse ye all ye princes
Nourisshed in vertue / intact / as pure as cristall
Releke to all synners / o werburge lady maistres
In grace thou passed / all other and in goodnes
Whan thou was present in this mundayne lyfe
None was the lyke / wydowe / mayde / ne wyfe

By diuyne grace / to vs a ryche present
Reioyce we may / in Werburge one and all
A gemme of vertue / a virgin resplendent
Dilect of our lorde (in ioye and blis eternall
Surely she is set) to intercede and call
Yer mouth nat cessyng / for them to call and crye
And in her trust / of synne to haue mercy

O good lady maistres / declyne thy syght aker
And graciously beholde / thy seruaunt chast and pure
Henry Bradsha / sometyme monke in Chester
Whiche only for thy loue / toke the payne and labour
Thy legende to translate / he dyd his busy cure
Out of latine / in Englisshe rude and vyle
Whiche he hath amended / with many an ornate style

Alas of Chestre / ye monkes haue lost a treasure
Henry Bradsha / the styrpe of eloquence
Chestre thou may wayle / the deth of this floure

So may the citezens / alas for his absence
So may many other / for lacke of his sentence
O swete lady Werburge / an holy Abbasse glorious
Remembre Henry Bradsha / thy seruaūt most gracio⁹

In hym remayned no vice ne presumpcion
Enuy and wrath / from hym were exyled
Slouth ne Venus in hym had no dominion
Auarice and glotony / he vtterly expelled
No vice in hym regned / his felowes he excelled
As clene as cristall / he bare these vertues thre
Chastite / obidience / and wylfull pouerte

O cruell deth / whiche art the perfite ende
Of this noble clerke / and euery mortall thyng
Agaynst the / no man may hym defende
Thou causest wo / langour / and anguissyng
And who on this / wolde haue remembryng
Howe from erth / to erth he must agayne
He wolde dispise all thynges that be mundayne. Vale.

The table of this boke.

First the prologue of the translatour of this litell treatyse Cap.i.

¶ A descripcion of the realme of mercies of the boūdes and commodites of the same Cap.ii.

¶ A descripcion of the geanologie of saynt Werburge and howe she descended of .iiii. kynges of this lāde / and of the riall blodde of Fraunce Cap.iii.

¶ A playn deſcripcion of the actz and chiualry of kyng Penda grauntfather to ſaynt Werburge / and of his noble and vertuous progenie. Ca.iiii.

¶ Howe after the deth of kyng Pēda/and of his prince Pēda his ſecōde ſon Wulfer father of ſaynt Werburge was elect to be kyng of merciens. Cap.v.

¶ A lyttell deſcripcyon of the noble maryage bytwene kyng Wulfer and ſaynt Ermenild, the kyngz doughter of Kent/and of the ſolempnite done at the ſame ſeaſon The ſyxt chapitre.

¶ A newe declaracion of the holy lyfe and conuerſaciō of ſaynt Werburge/vſed in her tender youth/aboue the comon cours of nature. Cap.vii.

¶ Howe this yonge virgin ſaynt Werburge was deſired of dukes and erles in mariage/and of the reaſonable anſwere ſhe gaue to them in auoydyng ſuche worldly pleaſures. Cap.viii.

¶ Howe the falſe Werebode deſyred kynge Wulfer to haue his doughter Werburge in mariage/and howe he graunted thervnto. Cap.ix.

¶ Howe the quene ſaynt Ermenild, wolde nat conſent therto/& how her bretherne ſaynt Wulfade/and Ruffin were agaynſt the ſayd mariage. Cap.x.

¶ How the falſe Werebode complaynned vpon ſaynt

Wulfade & Rufkyn to kyng Wulfer/and was the caule of their deth. Cap.xi.

¶ Howe kynge Wulfer was conuerted / and toke great repentaunce for his offence. and by the counſell of ſaint Ceade was a deuout man / and a good benefactour to holy churche/and founder of diuers places Cap.xii.

¶ Of the feruent deſire & ſingular deuocion ſaynt Werburge had to be religious / and of the dayly ſupplicacions ſhe made to her father for the ſame. Cap.xiii.

¶ Of the reaſonable & meke anſwere ſaynt Werburge gaue to her father/whan he moued her to haue ben maried. Cap.xiiii.

¶ How ſaint Werburge was made an nōne at Ely aft̄ her deſire vnder ſaint Audri lady and abbaſſe. Ca.xv.

¶ Of the great ſolemniſacion kyng Wulfer made at ye goſtly mariage of ſaynt Werburge his dought̄ at Ely / to all his louers and frendes. Cap.xvi.

¶ Of the holy profeſſion and goſtly cōuerſacion ſaynt Werburge vſed at Ely ī religiō vnd' ſaint Audri. xvii.

A litell treatiſe of the lyfe of ſaynt Audrie abbaſſe of Ely / & of her holy conuerſacion & great deuocion which Audrie was aunt and colyn to ſaynt Werburge. xviii.

¶ A breue reherſal of the lyfe of ſaint Serburge graūt

moder to saint werburge / & of her comyng to Ely to her syst Audrie thabbasse from Shepay monasterie. c.xix.

¶ Howe saint Ermenild after dethe of kynge Wulfer was made a noune at Ely / vnder her moder Sexburge and Werburge her doughter. Cap.xx.

¶ Howe kyng Ethelrede seynge the holy conuersacio of Werburge his nece / made her lady and presydent at Wedon / Trentā / & Hamburg. Also by her example and counsel made hym a monke at Bardeney abbay. c.xxi.

¶ The holy cōuersacio of kyng Kēred brother to saynt Werburge / & howe he refused his crowne / & was made a monke at Rome / & there depted a holy cōfessour. xxii.

¶ Of the goostly deuocio of saynt Werburge & vertuo' gouernans of her places / and of the great humilite she vsed to her systers and all creatures. Ca.xxiii.

¶ Howe at Wedō wilde gyse were pynned at her cōmā-dement / and also releced & put at liberte. Ca.xxiiii.

¶ How a tyrande without pite was punysshed his face set backewarde / and by his mekenes was restaured to helth and prosperite agayne. Cap.xxv.

¶ How deuers princes folowyng sensualite entēdyng to violate this virgine by power: by myracle were put to confusion. Cap.xxvi.

¶ How saynt Werburge gaue knowlege to her systers

of her departure / & howe she ordred in vertue her sayd monasteries after her departure. Cap.xxvii.

¶ Of the goostly exortacio saint Werburge made to her systers in her sekenes / and howe deuoutly she receyued the sacramētes of holy churche afore her deth. c.xxviii.

¶ Of the departure of saynt Werburge at Trētā vnto heuen frō this miserable lyfe / & what lamētacion her systers and subiectes made for her deth. Ca.xxix.

¶ Howe the hāburgen& toke the blessed body of Werburge frō Trentā by myracle & brought it to Hābury / and of the buriall of this virgin / and manyfolde signes shewed of god by her merites / the space of .ix. yere afore her translacion. Cap.xxx.

¶ A litel newe treatise of her hole lyfe / and how for her myracles shewed after her deth / the couent of Hamburi purposed to trāslat her body by helpe of kyng Coelrede reignyng in mercelande. Ca.xxxi.

¶ The solempne translacion of this glorious virgine saynt Werburge . and of the great myracles done at the same season by the might of god / and merite of this gracious lady. Ca.xxxii.

¶ Howe the body of saynt Werburge continued hole / & substācial at Hambury after y^e trāslacion by the space of .CC. yeres / tyll the danes were comon to this lande / or it fell & resolued was vnto powder. Cap.xxxiii.

¶ Here foloweth the lyfe of the glory-
ous virgyn saynt werburge/also
many miracles that god hath
shewed for her/& fyrst the
prologe of the au-
ctour.

¶ The prologe of the translatour of this lytell werke ye lyfe of saynt Werburge.

WHā Phebus had roñe his cours ī sagittari
And Capricorne entred a lygne retrograt
Amyddes Decēbre / ye ayre colde & frosty
And pale Lucyna / the erthe dyd illumynat
I rose vp shortly / fro my cubycle preparat
Aboute mydnyght / and cast in myne intent
How I myght spende / the tyme conuenyent.

I called vnto mynde / the great vnstedfastnes
Of this wretched worlde / not by cours of nature
How there be brought / some men to bulynes
Oppressed with pouerte / langour / and dyspleasure
Some other exalted / to felycyte and pleasure
The maker of mankynde / most in maieste
Ruleth all at his wyll / it may non other be.

Beholde dyscretly / and se the fyrmament
Consyder the sonne / and the mone also
With all the planettes / and sterres resplendent
How they kepe theyr cours / bothe to and fro
Euer obedyent / theyr creature vnto
And byrdes besely syngynge euery day
Praysynge theyr prymate all that they may.

The iiii elementes / in lyke condycyon
The fyre / the water / the ayre / and the londe
Obserben theyr duty / after theyr creacyon
And buxum ben / and euer so be fonde
Thus euery creature / as we understonde

Obeyeth to his creature / with humylyte
Except dyſſolute man / folowyng ſenſualyte.

If man wyll remembre / how he was create
To the lykenes and fygure / of god almyghty
And ſet in paradyſe / a place mooſt delycate
To haue the fruycyon / of eternall glory /
If not ſynne expulſed hym / to the vale of myſery
But that he wolde enclyne / his naturall reaſon
To ſerue his maker / truely at due ſeaſon.

Dyuers people / haue dyuers condicions
Comynly proued / it is euery day
Some ſet to vertu / and good diſpoſycyons
In penaũce / prayer / all that they may
Some in contemplacyon / the ſothe to ſay
Some in abſtynence / to chaſtyce the body
And make it ſubget / to the ſoule perfytely.

Some other reioyce / in ſynne and ydelnes
Some ſeruauntes to Venus / both day and nyght
Other to couetyſe / and worldly beſynes
Some to deceyue / by ſubtylte in ſyght
Some vnto marchandyſe / & wynnynge full ryght
Some ferefull and tymerous / without audacyte
Some ſadde and ſobre / and of great grauyte.

Many haue pleaſure to ſpeke of rybaudry
Some of fyghtynge / braulynge / and actes marcyall
Other to flater / and paynt the company
Some to ſyt bytwene the cuppe and the wall
Some to blaſpheme / and dyſſemble withall

To backbyte and ſclaũder / by malyce and enby
Some to extorcyon / theſte and playne robry.

Thus after fraylte / and ſundry compleccyons
Dyuers men dyuers in lyuynge there be
Dyſpoſed by a contrary dyſpoſycyon
Some vnto vertue / ſome vnto vanyte
Many maners of people / now we may ſe
Wauerynge in the worlde / without quyetnes
As a ſhyp by tempeſt / is dryuen doubtles.

Whan I reuolued / with due circumſtaunce
The dyuers maners / and mutabylyte
Of worldly people / and the great varyaunce
And how this lyfe / is of no ſuerte
Now in great langour / now in proſperyte
Yet after our merỳte / we ſhal be ſure
To be rewarded / at our departure.

Than to vertuous labours / we ſhulde apply
And ſpende not our tyme / all in ydlenes
For as a byrde is made / by nature to fly
Ryght ſo we ſhulde vſe / ſome good buſynes
To our ſoule helthe / with great mekenes
For tyme euyl ſpende in labours vayne
Is harde to be well / recouered agayne

But now ſyth I am / a relygyous man
For loſynge of tyme / can not me excuſe
Therfore I purpoſe / to do as I can
All ſuche ydlenes / whylom to refuſe
With the grace of god / the tyme for to vſe

Werburge. a. iii.

Some ſmall treatyſe / to wryte breuely
To the comyn vulgares theyr mynde to ſatyſfy.

To deſcrybe hye hyſtoryes / I dare not be ſo bolde
Syth it is a mater / for clerkes conuenyent
As of the. vii. aeges / and of our parentes olde
Or of the. iiii. empyres / whylom mooſt excellent
Knowynge my lernynge / therto inſuffycyent
As for bawdy balades / ye ſhall haue none of me
To excyte lyght hertes / to pleaſure and vanyte.

But now in auoydynge / ſuche great folyſſhenes
I purpoſe to wryte / a legende good and true
And tranſlate a lyfe / into Engliſſhe doubtles
I meane the ſpouſe / of our lorde Jheſu
Bleſſed ſaynt Werburge / replete with vertue
A noble prynces borne / & vyrgyne pure and gloryous
After an holy monyall / and an abbeſſe gracyous.

In the abbay of Cheſtre / ſhe is ſhryned rychely
Pryores and lady / of that holy place
The chyef protectryce / of the ſayd monaſtery
Longe before the conqueſt / by deuyne grace
Protectryce of the Cytee / ſhe is and euer was
Called ſpecyall prymate / and pryncypall preſydent
There rulynge vnder / our lorde omnypotent.

And yf I unworthy / begynne this lytell werke
I praye all the reders / mekely of pardon
To correcte and amende / ſyth I am no clerke
Excuſe my ignoraunce / and take the entencyon
My mynde is to ſhewe / her lyfe and deuocyon

That euery man and woman / enſample maye take
At this pure vyrgyn / ſynne to forſake.

And ſyth that ſhe is in blyſſe now glorifyed
It were no reaſon / her name be had in ſcylence
But to the people / her name be magnyfyed
To her laude and prayſe / honour and reuerence
Her parentes and bretherne / y^e^ floures of experyence
Haue ben kepte in cloſe / ſecrete many a day
Wherfore I purpoſe / ſomwhat of them to ſay.

Fyrſt I entende / to make playne deſcrypcyon
Of her Fathers kyngedome the realme of Mercyens
How longe it endured / under his tuycyon
Under how many kynges / it had prehemynens
Alſo of her petygre / the noble excellence
For ſo many ſayntes / of one kynred certayne
Is harde to be founde / in all the worlde agayne.

Unto this rude werke / myne auctours theſe ſhalbe
Fyrſt the true legende / and the venerable Bede
Mayſter Alfrydus and Wyllyam Maluyſburye
Gyrarde / Polycronycon / and other mo in deed
Now glorious god / graunt me to procede
Bleſſed vyrgyn Werburge / my holy patroneſſe
Helpe me to endyte / I praye the ſwete mayſtreſſe.

¶ A deſcrypcyon of the realme of Mercyens / of bondes and commodytes of the ſame.

The yere of our Sauyoure / by full cumpulacyon
Foure hūdred / nyne & fourty frome his natiuite
Werburge. a. iiii.

As venerable Bede / maketh declaracyon
Duke Hengyst came to this lande in great royalte
With Saxons / Angles / Jutes / thre people myghtye
Delyred by Cortyger / than kynge of Brytons
Came to defende / fro greuous oppressyons.

Also the yeres of our blessed sauyoure
Syxe hundreth foure score and nyne expresse
The Brytons were expulsed / so sayth myne auctoure
From Englande to walles / with great wretchydnes
In Englande than ruled / seuen kynges doubtles
Whose names we purpose / to shewe with lycens
But pryncypally / of the kingdome of Mercyens.

The fyrst realme of Saxons / began in Kent
The yere of grace / foure hundreth fyue and fyfty
Where duke Engystus / in honour excellent
With sceptre and crowne / fyrst reygned royally
The seconde was Southsex / sayth the hystory
Wher Adla and Ella / reygned full ryght
Whiche realme endured / but short tyme in myght.

The thyrde was West saxons / famous and myghty
Where fyrst reygned Kynge Cerdicus
The yere of our lorde / fyue hundreth one and twenty
Whiche realme by processe / and power victoryous
Subdued all other / to hym full memorous
The pryncypall Cytees / of his regalyte
Were in olde season / Wynchester and Salesburye.

The fourth was Estsex / where duke Erchenwyn
Fyrst reygned kynge / hauynge domynacyon

By the kynge of Merſelande / brought ofte to ruyne
The chyef Cytee was Colcheſter / of his domynyon
Alſo of eeſt Englande / was the fyfth kyngdome
Where Uffa crowned / had fyrſt the ſufferaynte
Of Northfolke and Southfolke / knowen in certaynte.

The ſyxthe was the kyngdome of Merſlande
Where Cryda was crowned fyrſt by auctoryte
Hauynge nyne ſhyres / obedyent to his hande
As after ſhall appere / more euydent to be
The ſeuenth was Northūberlande / vnder Ida & Alle
Whylom dyuyded / in ſondry kyngdomes twayne
The chyfe Cytee was yorke / wher ye kynge dyd reygne.

The realme of Mercyens / by olde antyquyte
As playnly declareth / Polycronycon
Thre hundreth yeres / endured in auctoryte
Under eyghtene kynges / worthy nomynyon
Greateſt of gouernaunce of all this regyon
Where Wulfer reygned / a kynge victoryous
Father to ſaynt Werburge / vyrgyn mooſt glorious.

The boūdes and lorſhyppes / of the ſayd Mercyens
As ſhewen dyuers bokes hyſtoryall
Were large and myghty / and of great prehemynens
Where the ſayd kynge reygned by power imperyall
This realme to dyſcrybe / begyn we ſhall
At the Cytee of Cheſter / and the water of Dee
Bytwene Englande and wales / of the weſt partye

And ſo tranſcendynge / vp towarde Shrewyſbury
By the water of Sabryne / vnto Bryſtowe

The Eeſt ſee meſureth / the Eeſt parte truely
The water of Thamys / the ſouth parte doth ſhewe
Flowynge vnto London / whoſo dothe it knowe
The water of Humbre was on the north ſyde
With the water of Merſee / theyr landes to dyuyde.

Of the foreſayd ryuer / and water of Merſee
The kynge of Mercyens / taketh his name
As mooſt ſure dyuydent / to be had in memorye
Meſurynge and metynge / the bondes with great fame
Of Merſee and Northumberlande / kynges of the ſame
Bitwene chelſhyr and lācaſhyr theyr kīgdomes certayne
As auncyent Cronycles deſcryben it full playne.

The ſayd myghty kyngdome / of Mercyens dyd holde
Many noble Cytees / with townes and burghes royall
Whiche Penda optayned / enlarged manyfolde
As Cheſter / Stafford / Lytchefelde / Couētre memorall
Lyncolne and Huntyngdon / Northampton withall
Leyceſter and Derby / Cambrydge and Oxonforde
Worcheſter and Bryſtowe / with other mo & Herforde

Many royall ryuers / were conteyned in the ſame
With ſundry kyndes of fyſches / ſwete and delycyous
It were tedyous to ſhewe / of them the dyuers name
In ryuers and in pooles / ſwymmynge full plentuous
Alſo foreſtes / parkes / chaſes large and beauteous
And all beeſtes of venery / pleaſaunt for a kynge
To cours at lyberte / befound there paſturynge

Alſo this royall realme / holdeth as we fynde
Habundaunce of fruytes / pleſaunt and profytable

Great plente of cornes / and graynes of euery kynde
With hylles / valeys / pastures / comly and delectable
The soyle and glebe / is set plentuous and cōmendable
In all pleasaunt propurtes / no part of all this lande
May be compared / to this foresayd Mersselande.

The people of Mercyens / the trouthe yt we dare saye
Lordes / barons / knyghtes / with all the comunete
In musture and in batayle / euer the pryce haue they
The kynges grace to serue / moost valyaūt in artylere
In all actes Marcyall / euer hauynge the victorye
With herte / mynde and harneys / redy day and nyght
Theyr enemyes to subdue / by power mayne & myght.

If they be well ordred / vnder a sure capytayne
And set to suche busyneſſe / theyr honour to auaunce
The tryumph they optayne / knowen it is certayne
In Englād and Scotlande / & in the realme of Fraūce
Fewe of them haue coūtred / by manhode & valeaūce
Great nombre of enemyes / with knyghthode & polycy
We meane them moost specyall / in the Weeſt party.

Many other commodytes / pleasures and proprytes
This sayd realme / holdeth of olde antyquyte
In royaltes and lordshyppes / landes and lybertes
Honourably dylated / in worshyp and polyce
Flourynge in wysedome / honours and chyualre
Verifyed by kynge Offa / moost myghty and excellent
Proued in his actes / by playne experyment

This Offa subdued / in hystory as is founde
The kynge of Weſtsaxons / Northumberlande & Kent

Droue Brytons to wales / out of this lande
And made a depe dytche / for a ſure dyuydent
Bytwene Englande and Wales / & to this day preſente
Is called dytche Offa / ſo that no Bryton
On payne of punyſſhement / ſhulde entre this regyon.

Kynge Offa trāſlated / as ſayth Polycronycon
By myghty power / the ſee of Canterbury
Unto Lychefelde chyrche / with famous oblacyon
For euer to contynu / confyrmed by auctoryte
Alſo he founded / ſaynt Albans monaſterye
Fyrſt of deuocyon / to Rome gaue Peter pens
Thus royall ſomtyme / was the realme of Mercyens.

¶ A deſcrypcyon of the Geanalogy of ſaynt Werburge and how ſhe deſcended of foure kynges of this lande / & of the royall blode of Fraunce.

¶ Regnum Merc. ex pte prīs.

This noble prynces / the doughter of Syon
The flouze of vertu / and byrgyn glozyous
Bleſſed Saynt Werburge / full of deuocyon
Deſcended by auncetry / and tytle famous
Of foure myghty kynges / noble and byctozyous
Reynynge in this lande / by true ſucceſſyon
As her lyfe hyſtoryall / maketh declaracyon.

The yere of our lorde / frome the natyuyte
Fyue hundreth.xiiii. and alſo.iiii. ſcore
Whan Auſtyn was ſende / frome ſaynt Gregorye
To conuert this regyon / vnto our ſauyoure
The noble kinge Cryda / than reygned with honoure

Upon the mercyens / whiche kynge was father
Unto kynge Wybba / and Quadriburge his syster.

This Wybba gate Penda / kynge of mercyens
Whiche Penda subdued / fyue kynges of this regyon
Reygnyge thyrty yere / in worshyp and reuerens
Was grauntfather to Werburge / by lynyall succession
By his quene Kyneswith / had a noble generacyon
Fyue valeant prynces / Penda and kynge Wulfer /
Kynge Ethelred / saint Marcyl / saint marwalde ī fere.

And two holy doughters / blessed and vertuous
Saynt Keneburge / and saynt Kenesswyde the vyrgyn
Whiche ladyes were buryed / full memorous
At peturborowe abbay / and now there lyen in shryne
The sayd kynge Ethelrede / by sufferaunce deuyne
Had a prynce Cochede / whiche after reygned kynge
That trāslated Werburge / the.x.yere of her buryenge.

Saynt Merwalde specyfyed / vncle to saint Werburge
By his quene saint Ermēberge a prīces doughter of kēt
Gate.iii. holy vyrgyns / saint myldred & saint mylburge
Saynt Mylgyde the thyrde / of vertu equypolent
With a sone Mereum / whiche frome the holy sacramēt
Of baptym was taken / by myracle expresse
To the blys of heuen / to reygne there endelesse.

The seconde sone of Penda / we meane kynge Wulfere
A noble valyant prynce / by lynyall dyscent
Reygnynge vpon the Mercyens with royalte & power
Mayed saynt Ermenylde / ye kynges doughter of kent
Where throughe the grace of god omnypotent

They had fayre yſſue / ſaynt Werburge / ſaynt Kenrede
Saynt wulfade / ſaynt Ruffyn / in ſtory as we rede.

¶ Regnum Northumbrorum / Ex parte matris.

The ſecõde realme of whõ ſaynt Werburge dyd descẽde
Was of ſaynt Edwyn / kynge of Northumberlande
Whiche maryed Quadryburge / his ryghtes to defende
Doughter of Tryda / kynge of Mercelande
Bytwene them deſcended / as we vnderſtande
Two comly prynces / the fyrſt we call Eadfryde
The ſecõde ſone in batayle ſlayne was named Offryde

Kynge Eadfryde gate Herefyc y^t^ was kynge of Deiram
This Herefyc by Beorſwyde his quene fayre & fre
Had ſaynt Hylde the abbeſſe / ſaynt Bede ſayth y^e^ ſame
Lady alſo foundreſſe / of the abbay of Whytbye
This ſayd kynge Herefyc / had another lady
The quene of eeſt Englãde / ſaynt Hereſwith the hyght
Mother to ſaynt Serburge / & thre other ladies bryght.

This holy Serburge / full of grace and goodnes
Was maryed to Ercombert / a noble kynge of Kent
Bytwyx them descended / a precyous ryches
The bleſſyd Ermenylde / humble and pacyent
Whiche for her vertue / was maryed full excellent
To Wulfer kynge of Merciens / with great ſolempnyte
And mother was to Werburge / a ſwete floure of chaſtite

¶ Regnum Eſtanglorum / ex parte matris.

The thyrde noble kyngedome / of her parentage
Was the realme of eest England / whylom ī great degre
Tytylus kynge of the same / byctoryous and sage
Gate Redwald his fyrst sone / a chrysten prynce was he
This Redwalde had.ii. sones / flourynge in chyualrye
The fyrst was Kenuherus / a noble man of fame
The seconde Corpwaldus / called by his name.

This foresayd kynge Tytylus / had a seconde sone
Called Egnicius / accepted as a martyre
Whiche sayd Egnicius / by lynyall progressyon
Had.iii. noble prynces / that worthy euer were
The fyrst was called Ethelwod / ye seconde Adelhere
The thyrde was sayne Anna / a kynge moost vertuous
In batayle slayne vnryghtfully / now a martyr glorio9

This forsayd kynge Anna / maryed as we rede
The holy prynces Herewith / for loue and amyte
They had a noble yssue / to encrease theyr mede
The blessed Serburge / sayne Audry of Elye
Sayne Ethelburge the thyrd / in Bryges now lyeth she
Sayne Withburge the.iiii. ye martyr sayne Jurwyne
And Aldulph after kynge / which regned a lōge tyme.

The lady sayne Serburge / eldest of them all
A gracyous matrone / endurynge all her lyfe
Was maryed to Ercombert / ye kynge of Kent royall
They brought fourth a progeny / noble to dyscryue
The blessed Ermenylde / vertuous mayd and wyfe
Whiche lady was mother / by grace of god almyght
Unto blessed Werburge / our confort and our lyght.

¶ Regnum Cancie et Francie / ex parte matris.

The.iiii. myghti kyngdome / of whom this royal pces
Saynt Werburge descended / was the realme of kent
Where reygned fyrst Hengystus / by victory & prowes
Whiche was the fourth man / by lygnage euydent
Procedynge fro Woden / a prynce full prepotent
Of whom our pgenytours / Angles / Jutes / & Saxons
Lynyally succeded / kynges of dyuers nacyons.

This foresayd prynce Wodē / as dyuers auctours sayne
Was the.xv. frō Noe / by naturall progressyon
Of his eldest sone Sem / descendynge playne
In saxons tongue Geat / after ryte and custome
Not of the lygne of Japhet / by theyr opynyon
Retourne we to Hengyst / and to his successoures
And speke of theyr royalte / to please the audytoures.

Ermenryc kynge of kent / reygned with great power
The yere of our sauyoure / fyue hundreth fyue & thyrte
Unto whome Engystus was great graundfather
This sayd kynge Ermenryc / had yssue sayre and fre
A doughter called Ricula / which maried was to fredde
Of Estsex and Mydylsex / gouernoure and kynge
Of whom a myghty kynred / by proces was comynge.

This Ermenryc gate Ethelbryct full vertuous
Whiche kynge reygned in kent / the yere of our sauyour
Fyue hundreth fyue & fyfty / & baptysed was gracyous
By blessyd bysshop Austyn / of Englāde called doctour
He was fyrst cristen kynge / & pryncypall protectour
Of the fayth within this lande / and founder was also

Of dyuers holy places / and monasteryes both tow.

This sayd kynge Ethelbryc / for the great habundaūce
Of ryches and honour / was maryed solemply
To the prynces Berta / the kynges doughter of Fraūce
And of them proceded a vertuous progeny
Eadburg & Ethelburg saintes / whiche Ethelburg truly
By Edwyne kyng of North / had. iiii. pūces honorable
And. iii. holy doughters / gracyous and commendable.

Also kynge Ethelbryct / had to his successoure
Kynge Eadbalde / in Kent reygnynge a longe space
Ye maryed lady Emma / of fraunce the chosen floure
And by her had yssue / sayne Enswyde full of grace
Also prynce Ermened his seconde sone / whiche wace
Maryed to quene Osslaua / of them dyd procede
Two holy martyrs / Ethelbryct and Ethelrede.

This prynce Ermened / had. iiii. ladyes bryght
Lyke the. iiii. floodes of Paradyse / shynynge in vertu
The eldest of the systers / sayne Ermenberge bryght
The seconde sayne Ermenburge / the spouses of Jhesu
The thyrde sayne Adelbryde / all vyces dyd subdu
The. iiii. sayne Ermēgylde / sayth they lyues hystoryall
Thre of them holy byrgyns / the fourth matrone we call

This foresayd Eadbalde / a soueraine myghty kynge
By Emma of Fraunce / had to his enherytoure
The noble kynge Ercumbert / full gracyous in lyuynge
Whiche maryed Sexburge / with worshyp & honoure
The kynges doughter of eest England specyfyed afore
This prynce loued vertue / prayer and deuocyon

Commaũdynge all his realme / to kepe ye faſt of Lenton.

Ercombert.xxx. yere / regnynge in his regaly
Had a noble progeny / in grace and all goodnes
His prynce hyght Egbryct / his ſeconde ſone Lothary
Whiche prynce reygned but ten yere / kynge expreſſe
Lothary ſucceded hym / raynynge.xii. yeres doubtleſſe
Alſo he had two doughters / ſaynt Ermenylde ye quene
The other hyght ſaynt Erkengode / a moynes ſerene.

This lady Ermenylde / was maryed royally
To the aforeſayd Aulfer / kynge of Mercyens
Bytwene them deſcended / full gracyouſly
A noble Margaryte / of hye magnyfycens
A roſe of Paradyſe / full of prehemynens
Mooſt bleſſed Werburge / the gemme of holynes
Our ſynguler ſuffrage / and ſterre of our clerenes.

¶ A deſcrypcyon of the actes & chyualry of kynge Penda graundfather to ſaynt Werburge / & of his noble and vertuous yſſue and progenye. Ca.iiii.

The yere of grace.vi. c. fyre and twenty
The foreſayd prynce Pēda / began for to reygne
The tenth man frō Woden / a prynce in Sarony
Sone and heyre to Wybbe / ſayth myne auctour playne
Fyfty yeres of aege / that tyme he was certayne
Whan he was fyrſt crowned / kynge of Mercyens
Thyrty yeres he reygned / with great reuerens.

Fyue kynges in batayle / this Penda dyd ſubdue
Saintes Edwyn & Oſwald / kynges of Northūberlāde

With Sygebert / Egnycius / and Anna full of vertu
Thre noble kynges / regnynge in eest Englande
With helpe of Brytones / by Bede we vnderstande
Dylated his regyon / with worshyp and honoures
Moche more than dyd / any of his predecessoures.

He maryed Kenelwith / a lady fayre and bryght
And by her had yssue / a goodly generacyon
Peada his prynce / Wulfer a noble knyght
Saynt Ethelred / and Merwalde full of deuocyon
Also saynt Merselyn / of holy conuersacyon
Saynt Keneburge / also saynt Kenelwyde
Auntes to saynt Werburge / upon the fathers syde.

Thre of his chyldren / as we vnderstande
Prynce Peada / Kyneburge / and Ethelrede
He maryed with Olwy / Kynge of Northumberlande
To. iii. of his yssue / for loue and for mede
Wulfer and Merwalde / the story sayth in dede
Were maryed vnto / the royall blode of Kent
To Ermenylde and Domueue / two ladyes excellent.

Soone after by grace / the mydyll parte of Mercyens
Under prynce Peada / were baptysed euery chone
Whiche Peada maryed / Elflede with reuerens
Doughter vnto Olwy / kynge of the North regyon
Penda therto graunted / without contradyccyon
Under a fre lycence / his people were at lyberte
Within all his regyon / baptysed for to be.

Also prynce Alfryde / sone to kynge Olwy
Maryed saynt Keneburge / syster to prynce Peada
Werburge

Whiche ſayd Peada / brought from the north party
Foure holy preeſtes / Ced / Beccy / and Adda
To preche to his people / the fourth was Duyna
Whiche.iiii. ſelden ſeaſed / day / nyght nor tyme
To conuert the people / vnto chriſtes doctryne.

Kynge Penda conſented / as afore is ſayd
And permytted doctours / to preche in euery place
Thyughout his realme / and neuer it denayed
To baptyſe his ſubgectes / by fayth and ghoſtly grace
He ayded them with ſocour / and helpe in that caſe
That wolde be conuerted / for theyr ſynguler mede
As ſayth myne auctour / the venerable Bede.

But by the temptacyon / of our ghoſtly enemy
This ſayd kynge Penda / this victoryous knyght
Of valyaunt men in armure / rayſed a great company
And to the North partyes went / purpoſynge to fyght
And cruelly to ſlee / by power / mayne / and myght
The foreſaid kynge Oſwy / as he afore had ſlayne
Sayt Oſwalde his brother / kynge and martyr playne.

Shortly was forgoten / the fauour of his affynyte
That fully was cōtracte / bytwene theſe kynges twayne
Joyned at the maryages / of theyr chyldren thre
Euer to haue endured / in loue by reaſon playne
yet Oſwy offered Penda / many ryche gyftes certayne
To auoyde his malyce / and for to kepe the peas
Whiche Penda refuſed / replete with wyckednes.

Bytwene theſe.ii. kynges / was a ſtrōge myghty batell
Not ferre from yorke / ny the flood of Wynwed

In the regyon of Leedes / where by fortune cruell
Kynge Penda peryshed / & carefully was leed
And.xxx. dukes with hym / were slayne and lefte deed
The kynge Oswy offered gladly / with good entent
His yonge doughter Edelfled / to god omnypotent.

He set her for doctryne / to the abbesse saynt Hylde
Lady of Strenyshalt / now called Whytby
And gaue.xii. possessyons / a monastery to buylde
Whiche place is from yorke / myles thyrty
He gaue great landes / to his sone in lawe Peade
But the thyrde yere after / this sayd prynce was slayne
By treason of his wyfe Elfiede / for certayne.

¶ How after dethe of Penda & his sone prynce Peada his seconde sone Wulfer / father to saynt Werburge was electe to be kynge of all the Mercyens. Ca.v.

After that this Penda / of Mercyens kynge
In batayle by kynge Oswy / cruelly was slayne
And his prynce Peada / after hym thre yeres reygnynge
Was put vnto deth / by his quene in certayne
These people of Mercyens / rebelled sore agayne
The forsayd Oswy / kynge of Northumberlande
And hym refused / as ye shall vnderstande.

All the sayd Mercyens / by a generall counsell
Fortyfyed themselfe / with power myght and reason
And crowned prynce Wulfer / as Bede doth vs tell
with honour / worshyp / and great renowne
Whiche prynce to kynge Penda / was the seconde sone
This prynce was preserued / afore tyme secretly
Werburge b.iii.

And ſaued by his ſubiectes / frome dethe and malady.

This valyaunt prynce / and redoubted knyght
Kynge Aulfer thus crowned / with great prolperyte
Upon the Mercyens regned / by tytle and myght
Whiche realme was dyuyded / whylom in partes thre
Fyſt in the Weſt marches / & in the South parte truely
The thyrde parte was nomynate / mydle Englonde
Ouer them all thre / he reygned as is ſonde.

This ſayd kynge Aulfer / in honour famous
Was deuoutely baptyſed / with great ſolempnyte
By two holy byſſhops / the bleſſed Finanus
And byſſhop Jerumannus / ſaythe the hyſtorye
The kynge made a bowe / of hye auctoryte
All temples of ydols / within his regyon
To deſtroy and chaunge / vnto chryſten relygyon.

This Aulfer was polytyke / replete with wyſdom
Victorious in batayle / proued by his chyualry
His enemyes oppreſſed / by manhode and reaſon
Subdued his aduerſaryes / and had the victory
From his realme expelled / all cruell tyranny
Conquered in batayle / at Aſhdum ryght famous
The kynge of Weſt Saxons / called Kenwalcus.

Alſo he ſubdued / vnto his Empyre
The Jlande Uecta / called the yle of wyght
And after that he had / of it his deſyre
He gaue the ſayd yle / by tytle full ryght
To the kynge of eeſt Englande / to enlarge his myght
Under that condycyon / that he baptyſed wolde be.

And was his godfather / of pure charyte

In lykewyse as this prouynce / of Mercyens
Whylom was greateſt realme / within Englande
Many yeres contynuynge / in prehemynēs
Ryght ſo the ſpyrytualte / well knowen and founde
How fyue byſſhop ſees / within this ſayd Merſelande
As at Cheſter / at Lychefelde / alſo at Worceſter
The fourth at Lyncolne / the fyfth at Dorchester.

Forthermore after dethe / of Jerumannus
Byſſhop of Lychfelde / Aulfer the ſayd kynge
Delyred the archebyſſhop / and prymate Theodorus
To graunt them a byſſhop / of holy lyuynge
To gouerne the people / by ſpyrytuall techynge
To ſhewe to his ſubiectes / the enſample of vertu
And to preche and teche / the fayth of Chryſt Jheſu.

This holy archebyſſop / and prymate Theodorus
Delyred ſaynt Cedda / of the kynge Oſwy
For his perfeccyon / and lyuynge vertuous
To be remoeued / to the prouyce of Mercy
Kynge Aulfer was gladde / of his comynge truly
Ryght ſo were all / the people of his realme
Thankynge therfore / the kynge of Jeruſalem.

Kynge Aulfer graunted / to ſaynt Cedda the cōfeſſoure
Than byſſhop of Lychefelde / moche poſſeſſyon
To edyfy chyrches / vnto chryſtes honoure
But namely he gaue a certayne manſyon
In the prouynce of Lyndeſy / ny vnto Lyncolne
Suffycyent to ſuffyſe / and well for to content

Fyfty ſeruauntes / of good relygyous obedyent.

This noble ſayd pryncé / and redoubted ſouerayne
Flourynge in manheed / wyſedome and polycy
Excelled the peres / of this realme certayne
In perſon / fortytude / and proued chyualry
Lyberall to his ſeruauntes / gentyll in company
Gracyous to the poore / and a ſure protectour
A founder of chyrches / and a good benefactour.

¶ A lytell deſcrypcyon of the noble maryage bytwene kynge Aulfer & ſaynt Ermenylde y^e^ kynges doughter of Kent / & of the ſolẽpnyte done at y^e^ ſame ſeaſon. Ca.vi.

IN meane whyle the kynge / mynded maryage
By the ſufferaunce of our lorde god omnypotent
Iſſue to encreaſe / acordynge to his lygnage
After hym to ſuccede / kynge and preſydent
He mynded mooſt / the kynges doughter of Kent
Prynces Ermenylde / nompnate ſhe was
A beautefull creature / replete with great grace.

Certaynly her father / was called Ercomberte
As afore is ſpecyfyed / the kynge of Kent
Her mother Sexburge / humble in her herte
Of whome Ermenylde / a lady excellent
Lynyally deſcended / by tytle full auncyent
Her graundfather / Edbalde kynge Ethelbyrctes ſone
The fyrſt cryſten pryncé / of Saxons nacyon.

Of foure myghty kyngdomes / ſhe is deſcended
From the royall blode of Fraunce / alſo of Kent

Upon her fathers party / as afore is notyfyed
And on her mothers fyde / by lyne auncyent
Frome the eeft Englande / famous and excellent
Alfo of Northumberlande / flourynge in honour
Conuerted and baptyfed / vnto our fauyour.

This fayd Ermenylde / this floure of vertue
Was euer dyfpofed / from her natyuyte
Unto the dyfcyplyne / of our lorde Jhefu
Enfpyred with his grace / and benygnyte
Refufed this worlde / ryches and vanyte
He vfed the maners / of fadde dyfpofycyon
Paffynge fragyll youth / and naturall reafon.

Suche fynguler confort / of vertuous doctryne
In her fo dyd water / a pure perfyte plante
Whiche dayly encreafed / by fufferaunce deuyne
Merueyloufly growynge / in her freffhe and varnaunt
With dyuers propyrtes / of grace exuberaunt
As fobrynes / dyfcrecyon / and mekeneffe bygynall
Obedyence / grauyte / and wyfedome naturall.

Euery tree or plante / is proued euydent
Whyther good or euyll / by experyence full fure
By the budde and fruyte / and pleafaunt defcent
Afwete tree bryngeth forth / by cours of nature
Swete fruyte and delycyous / in taft and verdure
Ryght fo Ercombert / by his quene mooft mylde
Brought gracyoufly forth / the fwete Ermenylde.

She folowed her father / in worfhyp and honoure
As her mother Sexburge / fhe toke imytacyon
Werburge c.i.

To lyue in clennes / presentynge in behauyour
Her father in power / her mother in relygyon
Humble in herte / hauynge compassyon
Pyteous and lyberall / where was necessyte
Joyfull to obserue / the dedes of charyte.

Forther of her lyfe / to make declaracyon
As the true legende playnly dothe expresse
Conslyder the hystory / with good inspeccyon
Of blessed Serburge / that noble prynces
The sayd conuersacyon / and ghostly swetenesse
That is perceyued / in her holy mother
The same perfeccyon / was in the other.

Neuertheless Ermenylde / escape ne myght
Worldely honours / and seculer dygnyte
As requyred so noble a state of ryght
Ryches / possessyon / namely her beaute
But vnto maryage / compelled was she
Of her parentes / contrary to her entent
To whome she was founde / euer obedyent.

This noble lady / by deuyne prouydens
Elected to her / a spouse commendable
A valyaunt prynce / the kynges sone of Mercyens
Called kynge Aulfer / famous and honorable
Reygnynge in Mercelande / with ioy incomparable
Excellynge many other / prynces of this regyon
In ryches / retynu / fortune / honour / and wysdome

At this maryage / was moche solempnyte
Her father Ercomberte / and her frendes all

Tho prynces her vncles / Egbryct and Lothary
The kynge of eeſt Englande / Aldulph in ſpecyall
Dukes / erles / barons / and knyghtes in generall
Whiche ſayd company / were redy that ſame day
To worſhyp the matrymony / in theyr beeſt aray.

This royall maryage / was ſolempnyſed
With ſynguler pleaſures / ryches and royalte
Theyr frendes coſyns / redy on euery ſyde
To do theyr deuoyre / and ſhewe humanyte
Nothynge wantynge / euery thynge was plente
Of delycate metes / and myghty wynes ſtronge
With mynſtrels / melody / and myrthes amonge.

Whan this fayre prynces / reſplendent in vertue
Came vnto Mercelande / in the order of matrymony
Than grace with good gouernaunce / dyd byce ſubdue
Uertue was mayſtres / cheſe ruler and lady
The faythe of holy chyrche / dyd growe and multyply
Relygyon encreſed / honour and proſperyte
In euery place pacyence / true loue and charyte.

At the ſolempne ſpouſage / of this lady bryght
Kynge Aulfer promyſed / on his fydelyte
Errours to correcke / by his wyſdome and myght
Clerely to expell / all ſectes of ydolatrye
Frome his realme / and fulfyll by his auctoryte
The promyſe truely made / at the fonte of baptyme
The chyrche to conſerue / and ſaue it from ruyne.

The myghty realme of Mercyens / alſo of Kent
That ſeaſon were brought / bothe vnto vnyte

And as one kyngedome / ruled full excellent
Theyr subiectes and seruauntes / in tranquyllyte
Kynge Aulfer by his quene / had a noble progenye
Aulfade and Ruffyn / with prynce Kenrede
And Werburge / of whome we purpose to procede.

¶ A breue declaracyon of the holy lyfe and conuersacyon of saynt Werburge / vsed in her tender youthe / aboue the comyn cours of nature. Ca.bii.

THis blessed lady / and royall prynces
Descendynge of noble / and hye parentage
Was doughter to Aulfer / the legende dothe rehers
Kynge of Mercelande / and of famous lynage
Her mother Ermenylde / ioyned to hym in maryage
They dwelled somtyme / a lytell frome Stone
At a place in Staffordeshyre / amyddes his regyon.

They had betwene them / other chyldren thre
Aulfade and Ruffyn / martyrs full glorious
Synt Kenrede his prynce / of greate auctoryte
Tumylate at Rome / a confessour gracyous
The lyues of these thre / we wyll not now dyscus
But speke of the ghostly / and meke conuersacyon
Of blessed Werburge / now at this season.

For as declareth / the true Passyonary
A boke wherin / her holy lyfe wryten is
Whiche boke remayneth / in Chester monastery
I purpose by helpe / of Jhesu kynge of blys
In any wyse to reherse / any sentence amys

But folowe the legende / and true hyſtory
After an humble ſtyle / and from it lytell vary.

This bleſſed Werburge / from her natyuyte
Folowynge the counſeyll / of her noble parentes
Dyſpoſed her ſelfe / euer to humylyte
Obedyent to them / with all reuerens
Loth to dyſpleaſe / or make any offens
Or dyſquyet any reaſonable creature
Thus was her maner / in youthe be ye ſure.

Sadde and demure / of her countenaunce
Stable in geſture / proued in euery place
Sobre of her wordes / all vertu to auaunce
Humble / meke / and mylde / replete with grace
Many vertuous maners / in her founde there was
And dyuers gyftes naturall / to her appropryate
As was conuenyent / for ſo noble a ſtate.

And as ſhe encreaſed / moore and more in age
A newe plant of goodnes / in her dayly dyd ſprynge
Great grace and vertue / were ſet in her ymage
Wherof her father / had moche merveylynge
Her mother muſed / of this ghoſtly thynge
To behold ſo yonge / and tender a may
From vertu to vertu / to procede euery day.

No merueyll it is / who ſo taketh hede
In naturall thynges / the dyuers operacyon
Dothe not a royall roſe / from a bere procede
Paſſynge the ſtocke / with pleaſaunt dylectacyon
The ſwete ryuer paſſeth / by due probacyon
Werburge c.iii.

His heed and fountayne / ryght so dothe she
Transcende her parentes / with great benygnyte.

And tho her bretherne / delyted for to here
For theyr soule helthe / ghostly exortacyon
yet she them passed / manyfolde more clere
In loue of our lorde / and meke conuersacyon
And lyke as Phebus / in his heuenly regyon
Passed other stretes / shynynge most pure
So dothe this bygyn / aboue the cours of nature.

Lordes / dukes / barons / within the kynges hall
Merueyled on her maners / and constaunte sobrynes
The plente of wysedome / and dyscrecyon withall
In so tender age / they neuer knewe expresse
Her mynde so perfyte / auoydynge all ylnes
But they knewe well / it pretended by all reasone
Synguler grace and goodnes / to her comynge soone.

Affyrmynge on this wyse / yf she wolde contynu
With suche vertuous maner / in yeres of hye dyscrecyon
That she sholde do honour / by the grace of Jhesu
Unto all her kynrede / and synguler consolacyon
An ensample of vertu / and humylyacyon
Theyr conforte / theyr treasure / and sterre full bryght
And chefe lumynary / shynynge day and nyght.

Fyrst in the mornynge / to chyrche she wolde go
Folowynge her mother / the quene euery day
With her boke and bedes / and departe not them fro
Here all deuyne seruyce / and her deuocyons say
And to our blessed sauyour / mekely on knees pray

Dayly hym delyrynge / for his endeles grace and pyte
To kepe her frome synne / and preserue her in chastyte.

Where youthe is dyspoſed / of naturall mocyon
To dyſportes and pleaſures / full of vanyte
This mayde was euer / of ſadde dyſpoſycyon
Conſtaunt and dyſcrete / ſtyll and womanle
Gladde in her ſoule / to here ſpeke of chaſtyte
Clennes and ſobrenes / and ioyfull for to here
Ghoſtly exortacyons / to her herte mooſt dere.

¶ How this yonge vyrgyn ſaynt Werburge was deſyred of dukes & erles in maryage / and of the anſwere ſhe gaue to thē / in auoydynge worldly pleaſures. Ca.viii.

AS tender youthe paſſed / this bleſſed maydyn
Dayly encreaſed / more and more in vertue
In ghoſtly ſcyence / and vertuous dyſcyplyne
Obſeruynge the doctryne / of our lorde Jheſu
Had his commaundymentes / in her herte full tru
So that no creature / more perfyte myght be
In vertuous gyftes (by grace) than ſhe.

She was replete / with gyftes naturall
Her vyſage mooſt pleaſaunt / fayre and amyable
Her goodly eyes / clerer than the cryſtall
Her countenaunce comly / ſwete and commendable
Her herte lyberall / her geſture fauourable
She lytell conſyderynge / theſe gyftes tranſytory
Set her felycyte / in chryſt perpetually

She hadde moche worſhyp / welthe / and ryches

Ueſtures / honoures / reuerence and royalte
The ryches ſhe dyſpoſed / with great mekeneſſe
To the poore people / with great charyte
But her ſadnes / conſtaunce / and humylyte
Uertue / gentylnes / ſo pacyent and colde
Tranſcended all theſe other / a thouſande folde.

The vertuous maners / and excellent fame
Of this holy vyrgyn / redoubted ſo ferre
In all this regyon / in prayſynge her name
That the nobles of this lande / wolde not dyfferre
But with ryche apparell / and myghty power
Came for to ſeke her / lyke as to Salomon
Quene Saba approched / to here of his wyſedome.

So lykewyſe ſome came / to her of her vertue
Some of her ſadneſſe / and prudent dyſcrecyon
Some for her conſtaunce / ſo ſtable and true
Some of her chaſtyte / and pregnaunt reaſon
Some for her beaute / and famous wyſdome
And ſome that were borne / of kynges lygnage
Deſyred yf they myght / haue her in maryage.

In beaute amyable / ſhe was equall to Rachell
Comparable to Sara / in fyrme fidelyte
In ſadnes and wyſedom / lyke to Abygaell
Replete as Delbora / with grace of prophecy
Equyualent to Ruth / ſhe was in humylyte
In pulchrytude Rebecca / lyke Heſter in lolyneſſe
Lyke Judyth in vertue / and proued holyneſſe.

The prynce of Weſtſaxons / a pere of this lande

Wyllynge to haue her by way of maryage
With humble reuerence / as we vnderstande
Sayd to her these wordes / wysely and sage
O soueraygne lady / borne of hye lynage
O beautefull creature / and imperyall prynces
This is my full mynde / that I now rehers.

From my fathers realme / hyder I am come
Unto our presence / yf ye be so content
With worshyp and honour / and moche renowne
In all honest maner / aperynge euydent
My mynde is on you set / with loue feruent
To haue you in maryage / all other to forsake
If it be your pleasure / thus me for to take.

ye shalbe assured / a quene for to be
ye shall haue ryches / worshyp / and honour
Royall ryche appareyll / and eke the sufferaynte
Precyous stones in golde / worthy a kynges tresour
Landes / rentes / and lybertees / all at your pleasur
Seruauntes euery houre / your byddynge for to do
With ladyes in your chambre / to wayte on you also.

With these kynde wordes / the bygyn abasshed sore
And with mylde countenaunce / answered hym agayne
The playnes of her mynde / to rest for euermore
Sayenge : o noble prynce / I thanke you now certayne
For youre gentyll offer / shewed to me so playne
ye be well worthy / for your regalyte
To haue a better maryage / an hundreth folde than me.

But now I shewe you / playnly my true mynde

My purpose was neuer / maryed for to be
A lorde I haue chosen / redemer of mankynde
Jhesu the seconde persone in trynyte
To be my spouse / to Whome my bygynyte
I haue depely vowed / endurynge all my lyfe
His seruaunt to be / true spouses and wyfe.

Therfore noble prynce / hertfully I you pray
Tempte me no forther / after suche condycyon
Whiche am so stedfast / and wyll be nyght and day
Neuer for to chaunge / nor make alteracyon
Take ye this answere / for a sure conclusyon
The promyse I haue made / and vowe of chastyte
Endurynge my lyfe / shall neuer broken be.

Dyuers other astates / came her for to assayle
Made instaunt requestes / vnto this bygyn fre
For all theyr busynesse / they myght not preuayle
So constaunt fyxme & stable / in herte & mynde was she
A mountayne or hyll / soner leue ye me
Myght be remoeued / agaynst the course of nature
Than she for to graunte / to suche worldly pleasure.

She well consydered / the texte of holy scrypture
Who byleueth her chast / for the loue of Jhesu
The temple of god / they be clypped sure
And shalbe rewarded / for that noble vertu
An hundreth folde (by grace) vyces to subdu
And heuen for to haue / at theyr departynge
Whiche she remembred wysely / aboue all thynge.

¶ How ye false Werbode desyred kynge Aulfer to haue

Werburge his doughter in maryage. And how ye kynge graunted therto. Ca.ix.

As afore is sayd / whan Penda the kynge
By saynt Oswy kynge / at Leedes was slayne
And Wulfer his sone / the fourth yere folowynge
Was baptysed and crowned / By bysshop Fynane
A solempne voue he made / faythfull and certayne
All temples of ydolles / in his realme to destroy
And chaunge them to chyrches / and newe edyfy.

The same he promysed / as he was true knyght
Whan that he maryed / blessed Ermenylde
Dredynge sore the iustyce / of god almyght
For his fathers demerytes / vnreconsyled
On hym to fall sodeynly / and so be begyled
Promysynge amendes / at his conuersyon
Unto holy chyrche / with humble deuocyon.

Whiche kynge Wulfer / as was the more pyte
By the wycked counseyll / of a fals knyght
Called Werbode / ranne soone in apostasy
For a lytell whyle / wantynge perfyte lyght
The bryghtnes of the day / was tourned to nyght
Whan he gaue credence / that creature vnto
Prolongynge the actes / he promysed to do.

Under kynge Wulfer / chefe steward of his hall
Was this false Werbode / ruler of euery porte
Whome the lady Uenus / brought vnto thall
Perced and wounded / so greuously his harte
Enflammed with loue / and with her fyry darte

Plonget with ſorowe / ſyghynge day and nyght
The beaute of Werburge / moeued ſo his ſyght.

The blynde goddes Cupyde / vexed ſo ſore his mynde
With interyor loue / and ſenſuall deſyre
Of worldely affeccyon / that reſte coude he none fynde
His ſpyryte was troubled / he brenned as dothe the fyre
Upon this holy vyrgyn / his loue was ſo entyre
To haue her in maryage / was all his intent
That euery houre was a moneth / after his iudgement.

Prouyded in his mynde / how that he well myght
Enforce hym wyſely / with boldyneſſe and polycye
To ſhewe his full entent / in maner good and ryght
No dyſpleaſure taken / vpon his lordes partye
By this ymagynacyon / he fell vpon his knee
Afore his lorde and kynge / deſyrynge a petycyon
His mynde to declare / with fully grace of pardon.

Excellent prynce he ſayd / and mooſt worthy kynge
That reygnes now within the realme of Englande
Flourynge in chyualry / in honour encreaſynge
Trāſcendynge other prynces / of this forſayd lande
My full intencyon / now ye ſhall vnderſtande
Requyrynge your grace / in this poore cyrcumſtaunce
At my petycyon / to take no greuaunce.

My ſynguler good lorde / hertfully I you pray
With inſtaunte requeſt / and humble ſupplycacyon
Graunte me your doughter Werburge / as ye maye
To haue her in maryage / auoydynge all treaſon
If your grace deny / this preſent petycyon

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Dethe me behoues / full ſoone and haſtely
My loue is ſo feruent / there is no remedy.

Stande vp Werbode / kynge Aulfer than ſayd
Our chyfe champyon / in all our chyualry
your humble deſyre / ſhall not be denayd
Of Werburge our doughter / now conſent wyll we
If ye may optayne / her wyll and mynde truele
Her mothers alſo / vnder that condycyon
We graunt her to you / at your meke ſuggeſtyon.

Of this gracyous anſwere / a gladde man he was
Reioyſynge in his herte / began to conſpyre
Caſtynge in his mynde / craftely by compas
How he myght optayne / to the hye empyre
And reygne after Aulfer / at his owne deſyre
But tho man pꝛepoſe / god dyſpoſed all
Who clymbeth to hye / often hath a fall.

¶ How the quene ſaynt Ermenylde wolde not cõſente therto / & how her bꝛetherne ſaynt Wulfade and Ruffyn were agaynſt the ſayd maryage. Ca.x.

Of this buſyneſſe / whan the quene had knowlege
Namely of Werebode / the greuous pꝛeſumpcyon
How he had moeued / thꝛught his wycked rage
The kynge in ſuche cauſes / by ſynguler petycyon
And how the kynge conſented / to his ſupplycacyon
She was ſoꝛe greued / at this pꝛowde crafty knyght
Called hym in pꝛeſence / and ſayd theſe woꝛdes ryght.

Thou wycked tyꝛaunt / and vnkynde creature

Folowynge thyne appetyte / and ſenſualyte
Thou cruell pagane / preſumynge at thy pleaſure
Blynded with ygnoraunce / and inkydelyte
Who gaue the lycence / and ſuche auctoryte
Our doughter Werburge / to deſyre of the kynge
Without our counſeyll / therto conſentynge.

Conſyder ryght well / thy kynred and pedegre
It is well knowen / thou arte comen of nought
Nother of duke / erle / lorde / by auncetre
But of vylayne people / yf it be well ſought
Agaynſt our honour / now that thou haſe wrought
Whiche conſequently / ſhall be to thy payne
For all thy labour / is ſpende in vayne.

Thou knowes of a certayne / refuſed ſhe haſe
Many a ryche maryage / within this londe
A thouſande tymes better / than euer thou waſe
Is now orels ſhalbe / by any maner fonde
Our doughter to the / ſhall neuer be bonde
Nor ſuche a caytyfe / ſhall haue no powere
With kynges blode royall / to approche it nere.

Under my ſouerayne lorde / and me alſo
An offycer thou arte / and of great royalte
To be a true ſeruaunte / now thou arte our foo
Tryed / proued / founde fals / in eche degre
Thou haſe well deſerued / to be hanged on a tre
For thy myſdede / thou ſhall ſoone repent
Thy hye preſumpcyon / proude and dyſobedyent.

As for our doughter / and dere derlynge

By the grace of god / and our aduysement
Soone shalbe maryed / to the mooſt myghty kynge
That euer was borne / and in this erth lent
We meane our sauyour / lorde omnypotent
Wherfore thy wretchydnes / wyll vpon the lyght
Thou taynted traytour / out of our syght.

With that saynt Werburge / came into presence
Afore her mother / and all the company
Doynge her duty / with all due reuerenc
Folowynge her doctryne / full sapyently
With lycence optayned / spake eudently
After suche maner / that all the audyence
Reioysed to here / her lusty eloquence

O souerayne lady / and kynges doughter dere
My dere mother / ouer all thynge transytory
O gracyous prynces / and quene to kynge Aulfere
To your ghostly counseyll / do me euer apply
As I haue promysed / ryght eudently
To the kynge of kynges / and lorde celestyall
I wyll obserue / endurynge this lyfe mortall.

And thou false Werbode / folowynge sensualyte
I meruayle greatly / thy hye presumpcyon
To moeue our father / with suche audacyte
Knowynge my mynde / set on relygyon
yet for thy soule helthe / accepte this lesson
Aske mercy and grace / of my spouse eternall
Lest vengeaunce sodeynly / vpon the do fall.

Wherwith her bretherne / Wulfade and Ruffyn

Two noble prynces / manfull sadde and wyse
Sore vexed with peyne / theyr hertes were within
At this false stewarde / whiche can so deuyse
Agayne theyr honour / to do suche preiudyse
As to attempte theyr father the kynge
In so great a mater / they not consentynge.

They called Werebode / afore them all
Sayenge thou caytyfe / who gaue the lycence
To moeue this cause / so hy and specyall
Touchynge a lady / of suche prehemynence
A kynges doughter / of moche magnyfysence
None comparable to hym / in all this regyon
In honour / royalte / power / and dyscrecyon.

And as our mother sayd / to the byforne
Loke well thy progeny / and all thy lynage
A byllayne ouels wers / sothly / thou was borne
Now our dere syster / wolde haue in maryage
As semynge for a prynce / of hye parentage
Than for suche a carle / by a prouerbe aūcyent
A lad to wedde a lady / is an inconuenyent.

Therfore we charge the / vpon greuous peyne
Moue no suche mater / nor speke of it no more
For yf suche mocyon / come to vs agayne
Of hye presumpcyon / as is done afore
Thou shalt repent / the cause and dede full sore
Now we commaunde the / no forther to contryue
But cease of suche busynesse / in peyne of thy lyue.

¶ How the false Werbode complayned vpon Aulfade

and ſuſſyn to kynge Aulfare by malyce and enuy / and
was the cauſe of theyr dethe. Ca.xi.

THis wycked Werebode / the bedyll of Belyall
The miniſter of myſchef / a ſergeaũt of ſathanas
Conſyderynge he was / deſpyſed of them all
And ſore rebuked / for his outragyous treſpas
He brenned in enuy / as a man without grace
Caſt in his mynde / how he myght wroken be
Upon her bretherne / by ſome ſubtylte.

Euer from that tyme / he lay in wayte
Sekynge occaſyons / on them to complayne
Dayly ymagyned / with ſubtyll deceyte
Them to ſubdue / and cauſe to be ſlayne
Attendynge oportunyte / to take them in a trayne
By the falſe entyſement / of his mayſter Belyall
Prompte to all myſchefe / as dyſcyple naturall.

In fauour of his prynce / by crafte he hym brought
(As now is in cuſtome) with falſe flatery
Some pleaſe theyr mayſter / and that is ryght nought
So dyd this Werebode / by ſubtyll polycy
His vengeable mynde / was hymſelfe to magnyfy
And utterly to loſe / theſe prynces twayne
Or deſtroye hymſelfe / by myſfortune playne.

Lyke as Archythofell / chefe counſelour to abſalon
Sundry tymes moeued hym / vnto baryaunce
And with kynge Aſſuerus / in fauour was Amon
Counſeylynge hym euer / vnto great myſchaunce
In lyke cauſe Werbode / moeued to vengeaunce
Werburge. d.i.

Was chefe counſeler / to Aulfer the kynge
Whiche brought hym ſelfe to ſhame / and euyll endynge.

The elder prynce Aulfade / in his diſporte
Aled haukynge / huntynge / for a paſt tyme
But vnto huntynge namely / was his reſorte
Euery day in the morowe / longe afore pryme
And as it fortuned / vpon a tyme
A myghty harte reyſed was / courſed a longe ſpace
Whome Aulfade purſued / with pleaſure and ſolace.

This harte ſore ſtrayned / ranne for his ſocour
As all deer done / of theyr propryte
To a well with water / after his great labour
Hym to reconforte / and the more freſſher be
Wherby ſaynt Cead / had his oratorye
The wylde harte there lay / full ſecrete and ſtyll
And ſuffered this holy man / to do all his wyll.

This bleſſed byſſhop moeued with pyte
Couered this ſayd harte / with bowes and leues alſo
Put a ſmall corde / aboute his necke trule
And after commaunded hym ſpedly to go
To the wylde woodes / whens he came fro
His paſture to ſeke / for ſaynt Cead knewe truly
It was a ſygne folowynge / of ſome great myſery.

(As Bede wytneſſeth) this holy confeſſour
Was byſſhop of Lychefelde / and Couentre
Whiche for the loue of our ſauyour
In wylderneſſe dwelled / all ſolytarye
Contented with fruytes / of the wylde tree

With rootes / herbes / water / for his ſuſtentacyon
Endurynge penaunce / with due contemplacyon.

This venerable prynce / enſuynge this great harte
Approched to his cell / with great dylygence
Tenderly requyrynge / where and in what parte
This harte eſcaped / ſo ferre out of preſence
This holy man anſwered / with all reuerence
Beeſtes / bydes / fowles / I kepe none at all
But I knowe the inſtructour / of thy helthe eternall.

By this brute beeſt / thou ſhall perceyue well
The ſacramentes of holy chyrche euerychone
To encreſe thy byleue / by our ghoſtly counſell
And ſo to be baptyſed / and haue remyſſyon
By dyuers brute beeſtes / for mannes ſaluacyon
Our lorde hath ſhewed / ſecretes myſtycall
To his electe perſones / by grace ſupernall.

To Noe came conforte / after the great deluge
By a douue / bryngynge a braunche of Olyue
To the prophet Hely / a rauen dyd refuge
Brought hym his ſuſtenaunce / and ſaued his lyue
Unto ſaynt Euſtach / full memoratyue
Our lorde appered / in a hartes lykenes
To whome he obeyed / gladly with mekenes.

Of whiche examples / prynce Aulfade gladde was
Thankynge god and ſaynt Cead / that he thyder come
And ſayd holy father / fulfylled with grace
If ye can ſupply / my inſtaunte petycyon
That the ſayd harte / myght retourne hyder ſoone

Whiche is now in wylderneſſe / vnto our preſence
Than to your doctryne / I wyll gyue fully credence.

Saynt Cead vnto prayer / deuoutely went
And the wylde harte / frome the wood came haſtely
With the corde in his necke / apperynge euydent
And in theyr preſence / ſtode full ryght ſoberly
My ſone than he ſayd / byleue than ſtedfaſtly
Underſtande ye may / all thynge poſſyble is
To a faythfull perſone / that perfytely byleuys.

Aulfade conforted / and in the fayth probate
Fell downe to his fete / with humble deuocyon
Delyrynge baptym / to be regenerate
Unto our ſauyour / for his ſoules ſaluacyon
Saynt Cead bleſſed / the well that ſeaſon
And baptyſed this prynce / in name of the trynyte
Was preeſt and godfather / for want of companye.

This chryſten prynce / taryed with hym all nyght
In faſtynge / prayer / and medytacyon
And was refreſſhed / naturally in ſyght
With bodyly and ghoſtly ſuſtentacyon
The next day receyued / the holy cōmunyon
With lycence departed / to his father agayne
The harte to the foreſt / recourſed certayne.

The thyrde day after / his brother Ruffyn
Followynge the ſame harte / by deuyne prouydence
Was well inſtructed / in ghoſtly doctryne
Baptyſed by ſaynt Cead / & communed with reuerence
And as it fortuned / by playne experyence

Of all the proces done / to the elder brother
All thynge dyd happe / ryght so to the other.

Afore this season / christes fayth moost gracyous
Thrugh this lande / was preched in euey place
By bysshop Fynane / and Jerumannus
Whiche Jeruman of eest Englande / fyrst bysshop was
And with saynt Ermenylde / came hyder by grace
yet fully conuerted / was not Mersee regyon
Clene frome ydolatry / vnto this season.

These forsayd prynces / conuerted newly
By blessed Cead / to christen relygyon
Dayly to hym resorted / for counseyll ghostly
To encreace in vertue / and holy perfeccyon
With lycence pretended / they wolde togyder come
Unto his oratory / from the kynges hall
Under colour of Huntynge / as they dyd it call.

And as it is wryten / in holy scrypture
Whoso is a sure frende / loueth stedfastly
And who is enemy / putteth dylygent cure
Myschefe to accomplysshe / moost studyously
The false Werebode suspectynge / euydently
The newe conuersyon / of these prynces twayne
Prepared hym craftely / to take them in a trayne.

He watched on them / secretely euery day
To knowe theyr resorte / and vnto what place
Lyke as a hounde folowynge / these prynces to bytray
Or a dogge dothe a dere / by sent of the chas
Whan he had perceyued / how all thynge was.

Ye compaſed in mynde / by falſe inuencyon
To complayne to the kynge / for theyr deſtruccyon.

My ſynguler goode lorde / and mooſt pryncypall
Sayd this Werebode / the fals traytour
Pleaſeth your goodnes / and grace ſpecyall
To my ſupplycacyon / to be a protectour
ye haue two prynces / myghty in honour
Whiche are my lordes / and euer ſhalbe
If they wolde be true / to your ſouerayntе

They haue refuſed / the more pyte is
your auncyent lawes / and ſectes euerychone
And with your lycence / haue done yet more amys
For now they be ſubiecte / to a newe relygyon
Utterly refuſynge / your decrees and olde cuſtome
Folowynge the counſeyll / and mynde of a ſenyor
Called byſſhop Cead / theyr ſpecyall auctor.

your ſtrayte commaundymentes / they dayly deſpyce
And purpoſe I tell you / in ſecretenes
Unto your perſone / to do moche preiudyce
To murther or poyſon you / ſhortly doubtles
And ſo for to reygne / and gouerne your ryches
Bytwene them twayne / to dyuyde your lande
By fals conſpyracy / as ye ſhall vnderſtande.

With theſe falſe tales / and many other mo
The kynge was moeued / to malyce and yre
By his compleccyon / as he was wont to do
More cruell than a beeſt / as feruent as the fyre
Depely affyrmynge / that dethe ſhulde be theyr hyre

If he myght take them / in any place
They shulde be slayne / and suffer withouten grace.

In the morowe after / whan Phebus began to clere
The kynge toke Werbode / with hym secretly
To try out the truthe / and how it wolde appere
Wheder his princes / were gone to the oratory
If it were so / he sende hym prively
To gyue them knowlege / of his entent
For to remoeue / from his hasty Judgment.

The father had pyte / vpon his chyldren naturall
Wolde not haue slayne them / the sothe to say
Wherfore he sende / the seruaunt of Belyall
To conuay them fro thens / some other way
The kynge knewe hymselfe / not able that day
To refrayne his yre / and cruell hastynesse
Gyuen to hym of nature / in suche great dystresse.

This wycked Werebode / came to the oratory
And sawe these princes / in great deuocyon
Counceyled his message / by malyce and enuy
Retourned to the kynge / hastely and soone
Newly complaynynge / by fals ymagynacyon
A hundreth folde worse / than at the fyrst tyme
With new addycyons / to bringe them to ruyne.

And whan the kynge / approched nygh the cell
Herynge the complayntes / of this fals knyght
The chyldren perceyued / a voyce ryght well
Cessed of theyr prayers / and came forth full ryght
On whome whan Aulfere / had ones a syght

He was ſore moeued / as hote as the fyre
Agaynſt her chyldren / that loued hym entyre.

But by the malyce / and wycked temptacyon
Of the deuyll / mannes olde mortall enemy
And what by the falſe crafty ſuggeſtyon
Of Wycked Werebode / fulfylled with enuy
And by his owne haſtyneſſe / and cruell fury
Theſe pynces were ſlayne / Aulfade and Ruffyn
Now glorious martyrs / reygnynge in heuyn.

After whan kynge Aulfer / approched his caſtell
And vnneth was entred / into his hall
Incontynently a ſpyryte / the falſe fende of hell
Entred fals Werebode / after the people all
Inwardly hym vexed / with peynes contynuall
That his armes and handes / he dyd horybly tere
Whiche ſodayne vengeaunce / all the courte dyd fere.

He rored and yelled / lyke a wylde bull
Shewed all the myſchefe / malyce and enuy
Done agaynſt the martyrs / with a mynde vnfull
So ſore conſtrayned / with peynes greuouſly
The deuyll ceaſed not / his dolours to multyply
Tyll his fylthy ſoule / compelled ſore was
For to expyre / for his hydeous treſpas.

¶ How kynge Aulfer was conuerted & toke great repentaunce for his offences. And by the cõſeyll of ſaynt Ceade was a deuoute man / and a good benefactour to holy chyrche / and a founder of dyuers holy places relygyous. Ca.xii.

Than Aulfer conſyderynge / with due diſcrecyon
His cruell haſtynes / and furyous mynde
How ferre he had / abuſed his reaſon
Agaynſt his chyldren / by nature and kynde
He ſore repented / in hyſtory as we fynde
His greuous treſpas / and vnnaturall
In conſcyence greued / for his ſynnes mortall.

Namely lamentynge / in ſoule his apoſtaſy
After his baptyme / and ghoſtly conuerſyon
And for the departure / of his prynces truly
Contrary to ryght / kynde and all reaſon
The loſſe of his fame / thrugh this regyon
A dethe to his quene / and his louers all
Greuous to his kynneſmen / and frendes naturall.

All theſe conſydered / with due cyrcumſtaunce
He wayled and weped / ſobbynge full ſore
Plonged in ſorowe / heuynes / and greuaunce
Lamentynge his offence / a thouſande tymes therfore
His intollerable peyne / encreaſed more and more
Wofully he went / to his bed by and by
Suppoſynge ſome dethe / without any remedy.

Some of his louers / beynge there preſent
Gaue hym theyr counſeyll / to hunte in the foreſt
Some to dyſportes / and pleaſures euydent
Some vnto melody / all thoughtes to degeſt
But Ermenylde his quene / whiche loued hym beſt
Counſeyled hym truly / to take contrycyon
And mendes make / by due ſatyſfaccyon.

Werburge. e.i.

Of this ghoſtly counſeyll / the kynge was very glad
And in the morowe after / prepared beſyly
With mekeneſſe to ſeke / bleſſed ſaynt Cead
So whan the kynge came / to his oratory
The byſſhop was at maſſe / and ryght conſequently
Fro heuen deſcended / ſo glorious a lyght
That of the myſtery / Aulfer had no ſyght.

Whan maſſe was ended / ſaynt Cead his veſtures caſte
Upon the ſonne beame / by myracle there hangynge
Suppoſynge on a forme / and made moche haſte
To mete at the doore / mekely the ſayd kynge
Whiche laye there proſtrate / penaunce deſyrynge
With reuerence hym eleuate / and gaue an exortacyon
The kynge was agreable / for to do ſatyſfaccyon.

The byſſhop hym enioyned / in parte of penaunce
To deſtroye all ydolles / and ſectes of ydolatry
In all his realme / and the temples of paganes
To tranſlate to the honour / of god almyghty
With preeſtes and clerkes / to pray and ſynge deuoutly
Alſo peas and iuſtyce / to be kepte contynuall
With the werkes of mercy / to be vſed in ſpecyall.

Forther he enioyned hym / of his charyte
Monaſteryes to make / of great perfeccyon
Endowed with landes / poſſeſſed in lyberte
Therin for to ſet / men of relygyon
To pray to our lorde / for his ſaluacyon
Whiche Aulfer promyſed / to fulfyll gladly
As ſoone as he myght / by poſſybylyte.

Than the foreſayd kynge / and the holy confeſſour
Went to theyr prayers / in the oratory
And as the kynge loked up / to our ſauyour
The ſayd ſacrat veſtures / he ſawe euydently
Hangynge on the ſonne beame / full merueyloully
His gloues / his gyrdell / the kynge had vpon
Whiche ſhortly to grounde / falled adowne.

Wherby he perceyued / the great holyneſſe
Of bleſſed ſaynt Cead / and interyor deuocyon
Deſyred his prayer / dayly with meekeneſſe
To almyghty god / for his remyſſyon
Frome thens departed / with his benedyccyon
Joyfull in his ſoule / towarde his place
Thankynge god mekely / of his great grace.

As the kynge promyſed / to our ſauyour
Shortly he auoyded / all ydolatry
Brenned theyr ydolles / correcked theyr errour
Tranſlated theyr temples / vnto god almyghty
Founded monaſteryes / of relygyon many
Of men and women / gaue them poſſeſſyons
Landes / rentes / ryches / to encreſe deuocyons

Namely he founded / a ryche monaſtery
For dethe of the prynces / in ſatyſfaccyon
To the honour of god / and ſaynt Peter truly
Called Peterborowe abbay / in all this regyon
Endowed it with rentes / lybertes / poſſeſſyon
A place where many / relygyous perſones be
Seruynge day and nyght / our lorde with charyte.

Also there was founded / at Stone a pryor
In the honour of god / and the martyrs twayne
Possessed with landes / rentes and lyberte
Where deuoute chanons / ben inhabyte certayne
Myracles and sygnes / haue ben shewed there playne
To the laude and prayse / of god omnypotent
And of these holy martyrs / patrones there present.

¶ Of the feruent desyre & great deuocyon ye sayntt Wer
burge hadde to be relygyous / & of ye dayly supplycacyō
she made to the kynge her father for the same. Ca.xii

AS this myghty prynces / encreased in age
So dayly encresed / her good condycyons
That greatly enioyed / her honorable lynage
Consyderynge in her / suche vertuous dyspolycyons
In vygyls / prayers / and ghostly medytacyons
Set all her mynde / power / myght / and mayne
To serue our sauyour / day and nyght certayne.

She well consydered / with due discrecyon
Of this present lyfe / the great wretchydnesse
How dredefull it is / full of varyacyon
Deceuable / perylous / and of no sykernesse
The tyme vncertayne / to be knowen doubtlesse
For here is no cytee / nor sure dwelynge place
All thynge is transytory / in short proces and space.

Wherfore this vyrgyn / gladde and benyuolent
Folowynge the counseyll / of blessed Mathewe
Was on of fyue vyrgyns / euer redy present
Had her lampe replete / with oyle full of vertue

Redy for to mete / her spouse swete Jhesu
With charytable werkes / in her soule contynuall
Therfore she was taken / to his blys eternall.

She well consydered / the wordes of the gospell
Who refuses pleasures / and naturall generacyon
For the loue of Jhesu / rewarded shalbe well
With a hundreth folde grace / here for theyr guerdon
And after this lyfe / haue eterne fruycyon
Whiche she remembred / and euer fro that day
On her father wolde call / and mekely to hym say.

Reuerent myghty prynce / and lorde honorable
Moost dere byloued father / my synguler helpe & socour
My trust / tresure / and solace / to me moost amyable
Instauntly I beseche you / for loue of our sauyoure
And of his mother mary / of vyrgyns the floure
With all the company / that in heuen be
My humble petycyon / now graunt it vnto me.

Well byloued father / this is my fully mynde
My instaunte desyre / and humble supplycacyon
By the grace of god / maker of all mankynde
And by your lysence / helpe / and tuycyon
I purpose to enter / into holy relygyon
And utterly refuse / all pleasures transytory
To be professed / at the house of Ely.

O my dere doughter / sayd this noble kynge
My pleasure / solace / and hope of my gladnesse
Moost dere byloued / and my synguler swete derlynge
I well consyder / your vertue and sadnesse

your inſtaunt requeſt / and humble gentylneſſe
And of your deſyre / inwardly I am gladde
But yet your motyon / makes my herte full ſadde.

All my ioye and conſorte / now reſteth in the
Syth thy dere bretherne / from vs ben agone
Thou arte the truſty treaſure / to thy mother and me
Our ſynguler ſolace / and ſure conſolacyon
Wherfore ſwete derlynge / as for my heyre alone
I wolde the mary / and a quene the make
If thou wyll conſent / and my counſeyll take.

Conſyder and beholde / thrugh all this lande
Take the a maryage / at thyne owne pleaſure
A prynce mooſt valyaunt / mooſt noble to be founde
And of helpe and ayde / I ſhall the aſſure
With ryches / royalte / welthe / and treſure
Clothes of golde / and royall ryche apparell
And all thynges neceſſary / as man can of tell.

Remembre alſo / how after courſe of kynde
Aege dothe ſore greue / thy moder and me alſo
Therfore naturall loue (ſwete chylde) dothe me bynde
To gyue the beſt coũſeyll / what thou ſhall do
To honour and worſhyp / how thou may come to
Whiche great renowne / and hye eſtate certayne
To ſe the a quene / wyll make vs yonge agayne.

God ordeyned matrymony / fyrſt in Paradyſe
Betwene man & woman / whan he the worlde dyd make
That mankynde myght encreſe / multyply and ryſe
Eche perſone at pleaſure / a ſpouſe for them to take

Now ioyned by holy chyrche / all other to forsake
The chylde of the father / to take his dyscyplyne
And after that to teche / his vtlue theyr doctryne.

Also man and beest / haue dyspolycyon naturall
To brynge forth theyr lykenesse / by generacyon
But man haurynge reason / and fre wyll with all
As lawe requyreth / hath his procreacyon
Under true matrymony / by his owne eleccyon
Or els to obserue / and lyue in pure bygynyte
For the greater meryte / and reward of glorye.

And yf all maydens / shulde kepe theyr chastyte
As ye now do / how shulde the worlde encrese
Swete louely creature / ryght ioyfull wolde I be
To kysse a chylde of thyne / haurynge thy lykenesse
And se the also coronate / as a myghty pryncesse
Enclyne dere derlynge / thy mynde to myne entent
And all these sayd honours / wyll folowe consequent.

¶ Of the meke answere saynt Werburge gaue to her father whan she was moeued to maryage. Ca.xiiii.

The holi mayd / whā she knewe her fathers mynde
Her soule was replete / with woo & pensyuenesse
And sore began to wepe / after cours of kynde
The salte teeres dystylled / for payne and heuynesse
By her ruddy chekes shynynge / full fayre doubtelesse
Pyteous to beholde / but whan the foresayd mayde
Ceased of her sorowe / thus to hym she sayde.

Moost beest byloued father / nexte to god almyght

your kynde gentyll mocyon / wolde moeue inwardely
The mynde of any creature / to folowe you ryght
Or any ſtony ſtomake / to relent and apply
And reſolue eche harde herte / to waylynge dolefully
Conſyderynge on euery parte / with good dyſcrecyon
To accepte or refuſe / this harde electyon.

Father I haue ben to you / meke and obedyent
Euer ſyth I had / yeres of dyſcrecyon
Gladde to obſerue / your hye commaũdyment
With loue intexyor / and humble intencyon
And ſo wyll contynue / with lowly ſubmyſſyon
In this preſent lyfe / whyle I do endure
Of my loue and prayer / euer ye ſhalbe ſure.

But mooſt louely father / I pray you hertfully
Take no dyſpleſure / pardon what I ſhall ſay
My ſoule / my herte / and mynde / is ſet ſtydfaſtly
To ſerue my lorde god / nyght and alſo day
Neuer to be maryed / by no maner of way
For ſothly I haue vowed / my true vyrgynyte
Unto Jheſu / the ſeconde perſone in trynyte.

That is my ſpouſe / and bleſſed ſauyour
For whoſe loue refuſed / in certaynte haue I
All worldely pleaſures / welth / ryches and honour
With all voyde buſyneſſe / and cures tranſytory
My loue on hym is ſette / ſo ſure and feruently
That nothynge ſhall ſeparate / my hert hym fro
Sekenes nor helthe / pleaſure / peyne / ne wo.

Alſo my full entent / was neuer otherwyſe

Than to be handmayde / to my lorde Jhesu
And of my soule and body / to make hym sacrysyce
For my ghostly welthe / all vyces to subdue
He is my dere spouse / solace / helthe moost true
On hym is all my herte / and hase ben set alway
And euer shalbe / vnto my endynge day.

In this wretched worlde / we can not longe endure
And of this present lyfe / we are in no suerte
As we haue deserued / so we shalbe sure
After this pylgrymage / rewarded for to be
For mercy and grace / therfore mekely call we
Whyle we haue tyme and space / for than it is to late
Whan dethe with his darte / sayth to us chekemate.

Wherfore dere father / I shewe you now agayne
All my hole herte / desyre and entent
Whiche euer hath ben / and so shalbe certayne
For to be relygyous / chast / and obedyent
Namely at Ely / for theyr vertue excellent
Father I requyre you / for chrystes loue and charyte
My meke supplycacyon / now graunte it vnto me.

The kynge well consydered / his doughters desyre
Her constaunte true mynde / and pure deuocyon
Graunted her petycyon / with synguler loue entyre
Trustynge by her prayer / and dayly supplycacyon
Vnto heuen blysse / the rather for to come
Her mother Ermenylde / was gladde of this tydynge
And lauded full lowly / our lorde and heuen kynge.

¶ How saynt Werburge was made a moynes after her

delyre at the monaſtery of Ely vnder ſaynt Audry / lady and abbeſſe. Ca.xv.

THan the kynge remēbred / with due cyrcūſtaūce
The excellent vertue / ſadnes / and grauyte
Of his dere doughter / and the perfyte conſtaunce
Her humble petycyon / and pure vyrgynyte
He thanked our lorde / with great humylyte
Of his infynyte grace / that ſo royall a floure
Frome hym deſcended / to his prayſe and honoure.

He ſende meſſages / in all goodly haſt
With letters myſſyue / thrugh his regyon
Commaundynge his ſubiectes / they ſhulde full faſt
By a day aſſygned / be redy euerychone
In theyr beſt maner / with hym for to gone
To kynge his doughter / to the hous of Ely
There to be relygyous / after her deſydery.

Whan the day was come / of theyr appoyntment
The nobles of the realme / and lordes were redy
To attende on theyr ſouerayne / at his commaūdyment
Kynge Aulfer prepared / all thynge pleaſauntly
And of his court / had choſen a noble company
In theyr beſt aray / royalte / and renowne
To offer ſaynt Werburge / to god and relygyon.

The kynge on his Journey / rode forthe royally
The quene hym folowed / as is the cuſtome
Werburge ſucceded them conſequently
The peeres and his counſeyll / knewe well theyr rowme
Dukes / erles / lordes / and many a worthy barowne

Knyghtes / squyers / gentyls / of her kynred also
With ladyes and gentylwomen / & seruaūtes both two.

Whan the kynge approched / the sayd monastery
Saynt Audry than abbesse / toke her holy couent
And mette the sayd kynge / and all his company
With solempne processyon / and gretynge benyuolent
Prayesynge our lorde god omnypotent
Whiche of his goodnes / to that congrecacyon
Sende them a syster / of suche perfeccyon.

Wereburge requyred / by the order of charyte
Mekely on her knees / to enter relygyon
Saynt Audry receyued / of her benygnyte
And graunted fre lycence / after her petycyon
Gladde were also / the hole congregacyon
And sange (Te deum) with moche reuerence
Magnyfyenge our lorde / of his prouydence.

She was receyued / with moche solempnyte
Into the holy order / after her entent
To proue her sadnes / and humylyte
(As is the custome) and so be obedyent
To lyue euer after / humble / chast / and contynent
Than dyd theyr Joye / merueylously encreas
Conslyderynge her pacyens / and perfyte holynes.

Her royall dyademe / and shynynge coronall
Was fyrst refuted / for loue of our sauyoure
The poore vayle accepted / and the symple pall
The royall ryche purpull / reiected that same houre
With other clothes of golde / sylkes of great honoure

She toke lowe appareyll / vestures that were blake
All her plesaunt garmentes / she clerely dyd forsake.

Also she refused / her fathers realme and royalte
All ryches / rentes / pleasures / possessyon
With all worldely honoures / full of vanyte
Lowly submyttynge her / vnder subiecc̃yon
Uertu to encrese / myndynge moost relygyon
She refused yet more her owne proper wyll
Put all to her abbesse / her order to fulfyll.

¶ Of the great solempnyte kynge Uulfer made at the ghostly maryage of saynt Werburge his doughter / to al his louers / colyns / and frendes. Ca. xvi.

Kynge Uulfer her father / at this ghostly spousage
Prepared great tryumphes / and solempnyte
Made a royall feest / as custome is of maryage
Sende for his frendes / after good humanyte
Kepte a noble housholde / shewed great lyberalyte
Bothe to ryche and poore / that to this feest wolde come
No man was denyed / euery man was well come.

Her uncles and auntes / were present there all
Ethelred / and Merwalde / and Mercelly also
The blessed kynges / whome sayntes we do call
Saint kenelwyd / sait keneburg / theyr systers both two
And of her noble lygnage / many other mo
Were redy that season / with reuerence and honour
At this noble tryumphe / to do all theyr deuour.

Tho kynges mette them / with theyr company

Egbryct kynge of kent / brother to the quene
The ſeconde was Aldulphe kynge of the eeſt party
Brother to ſaynt Audry / wyfe and mayde ſerene
With dyuers of theyr progeny / and nobles as I wene
Dukes / erles / barons / and lordes ferre and nere
In theyr beſt aray / were preſent all in fere.

It were full tedyous / to make deſcrypcyon
Of the great tryumphes / and ſolempne royalte
Belongynge to the feeſt / the honour and prouyſyon
By playne declaracyon / vpon euery partye
But the ſothe to ſay / withouten ambyguyte
All herbes and floures / fragraunt fayre and ſwete
Were ſtrawed in halles / and layd vnder theyr fete.

Clothes of golde and arras / were hanged in the hall
Depaynted with pyctures / and hyſtoryes manyfolde
Well wrought and craftely / with precyous ſtones all
Glyterynge as Phebus / and the beten golde
Lyke an erthly paradyſe / pleaſaunt to beholde
As for the layd moynes / was not them amonge
But prayenge in her cell / as done all nouyce yonge.

The ſtory of Adam / there was goodly wrought
And of his wyfe Eue / betwene them the ſerpent
How they were deceyued / and to theyr peynes brought
There was Cayn and Abell / offerynge theyr preſent
The ſacryfyce of Abell / accepte full euydent
Tuball and Tubalcain / were purtrayed in that place
The inuentours of muſyke / and craftes by great grace.

Noe and his ſhyppe / was made there curyouſly

Sendynge forth a rauen / whiche neuer came agayne
And how the douue retourned / with a braunche haftely
A token of confort and peace / to man certayne
Abraham there was / ſtandynge upon the mount playne
To offer in ſacryfyce / Iſaac his dere ſone
And how the ſhepe for hym / was offered in oblacyon.

The twelue ſones of Jacob / there were in purtrayture
And how into Egypt / yonge Joſeph was ſolde
There was inpryſoned / by a falſe coniectour
After in all Egypte / was ruler (as is tolde)
There was in pycture / Moyſes wyſe and bolde
Our lorde apperynge / in buſhe flammynge as fyre
And nothynge therof brent / lefe / tree / nor ſpyre.

The ten plages of Egypte / were well emboſt
The chyldren of Iſraell / paſſynge the reed ſee
Kynge Pharoo drowned / with all his proude hooſt
And how the two tables / at the mounte of Synaye
Were gyuen to Moyſes / and how ſoone to ydolatry
The people were prone / and punyſſhed were therfore
How Datan and Abyron / for pryde were loſt full youre.

Duke Joſue was ioyned / after them in pycture
Ledynge the Iſrehelytes / to the lande of promyſſyon
And how the ſayd lande / was dyuyded by meſure
To the people of god / by equall ſundry porcyon
The Judges and byſſhops / were there euerychone
Theyr noble actes / and tryumphes Marcyall
Freſſhly were browdred / in theſe clothes royall.

Nexte to hye borde lorde / appered fayre and bryght

Kynge Saull and Dauyd / and prudent Salomon
Roboas succedynge / whiche soone lost his myght
The good kynge Ezechyas / and his generacyon
And so to the Machabees / and dyuers other nacyon
All these sayd storyes / so rychely done and wrought
Belōgyng to kyng Aulfer / agayn yᵗ tyme were brought

But ouer the hye desse / in the pryncypall place
Where the sayd thre kynges / sate crowned all
The best hallynge hanged / as reason was
Wherin were wrought / the .ix. ordres angelycall
Dyuyded in thre Jerarchyes / not cessynge to call
Sanctus / sanctus / sanctus / blessed be the trynyte
Dominus deus sabaoth / thre persones in one deyte.

Nexte in ordre suynge / sette in goodly purtrayture
Was our blessed lady / floure of femynyte
With the twelue apostles / echeone in his fygure
And the foure euangelystes / wrought moost curyously
Also the dyscyples / of chryst in theyr degre
Prechynge and techynge / vnto euery nacyon
The faythtes of holy chyrche / for theyr saluacyon.

Martyrs than folowed / ryght manyfestly
The holy innocentes / whome Herode had slayne
Blessed saynt Stephan / the prothomartyr truly
Saynt Laurēce / saynt Vyncēt / sufferynge great payne
With many other mo / than here ben now certayne
Of whiche sayd martyrs / exsample we may take
Pacyence to obserue / in herte for chrystes sake.

Confessours approched / ryght conuenyent

Freſhely enbrodred / in ryche tyſſhewe and fyne
Saynt Nycholas ſaynt Benedycte / and his couent
Saynt Jerom / Baſylyus / and ſaynt Auguſtyne
Gregory the great doctour / Ambroſe and ſaynt Martyne
All theſe were ſette / in goodly purtrayture
Them to beholde / was a heuenly pleaſure.

Vyrgyns them folowed / crowned with the lyly
Amonge whome our lady / chefe prelydent was
Some crowned with rooſes / for theyr great victory
Saynt Katheryne / ſaynt Margarete / ſaynt Agathas
Saynt Cycyly / ſaynt Agnes / and ſaynt Charytas
Saynt Lucye / ſaynt Wenefryde / and ſaynt Apolyn
All theſe were brothered / the clothes of golde within.

Upon the other ſyde / of the hall ſette were
Noble auncyent ſtoryes / & how the ſtronge Sampſon
Subdued his enemyes / by his myghty power
Of Hector of Troy / ſlayne by fals treaſon
Of noble Arthur / kynge of this regyon
With many other mo / whiche it is to longe
Playnly to expreſſe / this tyme you amonge.

The tables were couered / with clothes of Dyaper
Rychely enlarged / with ſyluer and with golde
The cupborde with plate / ſhynynge fayre and clere
Marſhalles theyr offyces / fulfylled manyfolde
Of myghty wyne plenty / bothe newe and olde
All maner kynde / of meetes delycate
(When grace was ſayd) to them was preparate.

To this noble feeſt / there was ſuche ordynaunce

That nothynge wanted / that goten myght be
On see and on lande / but there was habundaunce
Of all maner pleasures / to be had for monye
The bordes all charged / full of meet plente
And dyuers subtyltes / prepared sothly were
With cordyall spyces / theyr ghestes for to chere.

The Joyfull wordes / and swete communycacyon
Spoken at the table / it were harde to tell
Eche man at lyberte / without interrupcyon
Bothe sadnes and mythes / also pryue counsell
Some adulacyon / some the truthe dyd tell
But the great astates / spake of theyr regyons
Knyghtes of theyr chyualry / of craftes the comons.

Certayne at eche cours / of seruyce in the hall
Trumpettes blewe vp / shalmes and claryons
Shewynge theyr melody with / toynes musycall
Dyuers other mynstrelles / in crafty proporcyons
Made swete concordaunce / and lusty dyuysyons
An heuenly pleasure / suche armony to here
Reioysynge the hertes / of the audyence full clere.

A synguler mynstrell / all other ferre passynge
Toyned his instrument / in pleasaunte armony
And sange moost swetely / the company gladynge
Of myghty conquerours / the famous victory
Wherwith was rauysshed / theyr spyrytes and memory
Specyally he sange / of the great Alexandere
Of his tryumphes and honours / endurynge.xii.yere.

Solemply he songe / the state of the Romans

Ruled vnder kynges / by polycy and wyſedome
Of theyr hye iuſtyce / and ryghtfull ordynauns
Dayly encreaſynge / in worſhyp and renowne
Tyll Tarquyne y^e proude kynge / with y^e great cōſulyon
Oppreſſed dame Lucrece / the wyfe of Colatyne
Kynges neuer reygned in Rome / ſyth that tyme.

Alſo how the Romayns / vnder thre dyctatours
Gouerned all regyons / of the worlde ryght wyſely
Tyll Julyus Ceſar / excellynge all conquerours
Subdued Pompeius / and toke the hole monarchy
And the rule of Rome / to hymſelfe manfully
But Caſſius Brutus / the fals conſpyratour
Cauſed to be ſlayne / the ſayd noble emperour.

After the ſayd Julyus / ſucceded his ſyſter ſone
Called Octauyanus / in the imperyall ſee
And by his precepte / was made deſcrypcyon
To euery regyon / lande / ſhyre / and cytee
A trybute to pay / vnto his dygnyte
That tyme was / vnyuerſall peas and honour
In whiche tyme was borne / our bleſſed ſauyoure.

All theſe hyſtoryes / noble and auncyent
Reioyſynge the audyence / he ſange with pleaſuer
And many other mo / of the newe teſtament
Pleaſaunt and profytable / for theyr ſoules cure
Whiche be omytted / now not put in vre
The mynyſters were redy / theyr offyce to fulfyll
To take vp the tables / at theyr lordes wyll.

Whan this noble feeſt / and great ſolempnyte.

Dayly endurynge / a longe tyme and ſpace
Was royally ended / with honour and royalte
Eche kynge at other / lyſence taken hace
And ſo departed from thens / to theyr place
Kynge Aulfer retourned / with worſhyp and renowne
Frome the houſe of Ely / to his owne manſyon.

¶ Of the holy profeſſyon & ghoſtly conuerſacyon ſaynt Werburge vſed at Ely in relygyon / vnder ſaynt Audry her abbeſſe and coſyn. Ca.xvii.

SO whan this vyrgyn / the ſpouſe of Jheſu
Had fully contynued / in holy relygyon
With mekeneſſe / pacyens / and all vertu
Fully the yere / of her probacyon
Than ſhe made inſtaunce / for her profeſſyon
Unto ſaynt Audry / her lady and abbeſſe
Whiche ſoone was graunted / with great gladneſſe.

Ordynaunce they made / and great royalte
Her frendes were called / agaynſt that ſeaſon
She was profeſſed / with great humylyte
The obſeruaunce done / with due deuocyon
She made ſolempne bowe / of ghoſtly conuerſacyon
Mekely to obſerue / obedyence and chaſtyte
Endurynge her lyfe / and wylfull pouerte.

By the exſample / of her perfeccyon
Many dyuers perſones / of her noble lynage
Refuſed this worlde / and entred relygyon
Renoūſynge vayne pleaſures / ryches and maryage
Enclyned to vertue / for theyr ghoſtly auauntage
Werburge f.ii.

As may be ſpecyfyed / here after folowynge
Theyr names / theyr eſtate / and theyr good lyuynge.

Now this glorious vyrgyn / after her deſyre
Is ghoſtly maryed / to our lorde Jheſu
Accordynge to her entent / and true loue entyre
She dayly encreſed / frome vertu to vertu
With more ſtrayter lyfe / vyces to ſubdu
The longer ſhe endured / in relygyon
The better ſhe prepared / her herte to deuocyon.

And tho this vyrgyn / clerely dyd forſake
All ryches honours / and pleaſures worldly
With all poſſeſſyons / for her lordes ſake
She thought than ſhe reygned / mooſt lyke a lady
Cauſe that ſhe lyued / in chryſtes ſeruyce dayly
And certayne it is / holy ſcrypture recordynge
Who ſerues well god / dothe reygne lyke a kynge.

In prayer / penaunce / and / contemplacyon
Was all her buſyneſſe / and ſtudy alway
Compaſynge by what maner of medytacyon
She myght beſt pleaſe / our lorde to his pay
Offerynge her perſone / a true ſacryfyce euery day
No labour her greued / loue was ſo feruent
Her body vpon erthe / her ſoule in heuen lent.

Swete / comly creatures / ladyes euerychone
Sekynge for pleaſures / ryches and arayment
Blynded by your beaute / and ſynguler affeccyon
Conſyder this vyrgyn / humble and pacyent
A ſpectacle of vertue / euer obedyent.

Beholde how she hase / clerely layde away
Her royall ryche clothes / and is in meke aray.

your garmentes now be gay and glorious
Euery yere made / after a newe inuencyon
Of sylke and veluet / costly and precyous
Brothered full rychely / after the beest facyon
Shynynge lyke angels / in your opynyon
Where lesse wolde suffyse / and content as well
As all that great cost / folowynge wyse counsell.

A playne example / now ye may take
Of this myghty kynges doughter dere
Whiche for the loue of god / dyd forsake
All suche vayne pleasures / and garmentes clere
She gaue herselfe / to penaunce and prayere
Wherfore fayre ladyes / do way suche vanyte
Prepare yourselfe / to vertue and humylyte.

Some of lowe byrthe / excellynge theyr degre
Done couet to haue / as royall ryche vesture
Worldly honours / also the sufferaynte
As they were ladyes / by lyne of nature
Of dredefull mysery / they bere the fygure
Prowde as a Pecocke / whelynge full byght
All is but vanyte / contentynge the syght.

O Glorious bygyn / replete with synguler grace
Endowed with soueraine gyftes celestyall
Refulynge voyde pleasures / whan thou had space
And honours transytory / whiche hath brought in thrall
A thousande persones / in ruyne to fall

A myrrour thou arte / of vyrgynall clennes
Of true obedyence / and perfyte mekenes.

So Werburge profeſſed / to her rule full ryght
A redolent floure / all vertue to augment
As Lucyfer ſhynynge / a clere lampe of lyght
For whome her ſpouſe / god ſone omnypotent
Shewed many myracles / to euery pacyent
A ſygne her loue was / ſupernaturall
Cloſed in our lorde / by grace ſupernall.

The excellent goodnes / of this moynes
And fame of vertue / with humylyte
Tranſcended all other / in perfyte holynes
So that ſundry perſones / approched that party
For ghoſtly conforte / counſell and remedy
Suche as to her came / penſyue / woo / and ſadde
Departed ioyfull / in ſoule mery and gladde.

She dayly prouyded / for ghoſtly treaſure
To buylde her a place / a ſure manſyon
Euer to remayne / with ioye and endure
In pleaſure perpetuall / without corrupcyon
Whiche ſhe optayned / by her deuocyon
After this departure / to reygne as a prelydent
In eterne blys / with god omnypotent

¶ A lytell treatyſe of the lyfe of ſaynt Audry abbeſſe of Ely / and of her holy couerſacyon and great deuocyon / vnder whome ſaynt Werburge was made nonne / and profeſſed. Ca. xviii.

The yere of our lorde.vi.C.ix. and thyrty
Regned ſaynt Anna / kynge of eeſt Englande
Whiche maryed ſaynt Herelwith / of the Northy party
They had noble yſſue / as we vnderſtande
Prynce Aldulph and Jurwyne / in ſtory as is founde
Saynt Serburge the quene / and bleſſed Audry
Saynt Ethelberge / Withburge / a holy progeny.

This bleſſed Audry / called Etheldred
Of two great kyngedomes / lynyally deſcendynge
Was borne in Suffolke / as ſayth ſaynt Bede
In a lytell vyllage / called Ermynge
This noble prynces / and dere derlynge
With many great vertues / of grace illumynate
Magnyfyed her parage / and royall eſtate.

This bleſſed Audry / from her yonge aege
Was diſpoſed euer / vnto ſadnes
Obedyent lowly / vnto her parentage
Encreaſynge in vertue / and conſtaunt ſobrynes
Worldely pleaſures / diſportes / and wantonnes
Lyghtnes of language / and all preſumpcyon
In this ſayd vyrgyn / had no domynacyon.

Sad and demure / ſhe was in countenaunce
Nothynge enclyned / vnto fragylyte
Benynge and pacyent / without perturbaunce
Meke / curteys / gentyll / full of humylyte
Pryde / ſtatelenes / and ſenſualyte
Were not in her foūde / by any condycyon
Curteyſe in byhauour / vnto euery perſone.

No man was greued / nor toke displeasure
At this sayd mayden / in her fathers hall
Euery honest persone / and reasonable creature
Were pleased with her / bothe one and all
None discontent / pryuate nor generall
She was so meke / and full of pacyence
That people desyred / to come to her presence.

She was beauteous / fayre and amyable
Pleasaunte to beholde / in gyftes of nature
Her countenaunce comly / swete / louely / and stable
Nothynge dysposed / vnto worldely pleasure
More lyke an angell / by all coniecture
Than a fragyll mayde / of sensuall appetyte
For in vayne pleasures / she had no delyte.

Whan that she came / to yeres of discrecyon
Dyuers her moeued / in way of maryage
Some offered ryches / royalte / and renowne
Some other possessyons / landes and herytage
And some the sufferaynte / her mynde to asswage
All these she refused / for the loue of Jhesu
To whome she auowed / her chastyte full tru.

After that Uenus / had her longe assayled
To peruerte her mynde / to worldly affeccyon
And of all nettes and engynes / therof had fayled
Than came to her presence / a prynce of renowne
Called duke Tombert / of the eest regyon
Whiche longe desyred / to haue her in spousage
At the laste optayned / the wyll of her parentage.

Unto whiche thynge / he wolde neuer enclyne
For all the mocyon / of her hye parentes
Tyll she was assured / by heuenly doctryne
To kepe her vyrgynyte / clere in conscyens
Than she consented / without concupyscens
And with the sayd duke / she lyued in chastyte
Bothe mayden and wyfe / almost yeres thre.

After whose dethe / she remayned in Ely
In fastynge / prayer / vygyls / and penaunce
Whiche place was gyuen / to her Joynt and dowry
By Tombert her husbande / with great pleasaunce
This yle of Ely / by deuyne purueaunce
With muddy waters / is compased aboute
Theyr enemyes to greue / and strongely to holde out.

Thyder came Egbryct / kynge of the north parte
To desyre saynt Audry / in matrymony
To whome she wolde neuer / consent in herte
For no maner counseyll / that myght be done truly
Tho her syster Serburge / moeued her tenderly
Tyll the angell of god / assured her to be
Quene / wyfe / and mayde / kepynge vyrgynyte.

Than Audry graunted / maryed for to be
Unto this forsayd / noble kynge Egfryde
And at the maryage / was great solempnyte
Tryumphes honoures / on euery syde
Great cost and royalte / they dyd prouyde
Frome Ely departed / vnto his owne place
In the North parte dwellynge / with great solace.

Werburge. g.i.

By the grace of our lorde god / moost of myght
And helpe of his mother / blessed mayd mary
By prayer of Audry / and by myracle ryght
Togyder they lyued / bothe in pure chastyte
The naturall mocyon / of his lascyuyte
Was shortly slaked / and feruent desyre
By myracle / as water quencheth the fyre.

Whan he apperceyued / her assured constaunce
Her perfyte holynes / and chast contynence
His herte reioysed / of her contynuaunce
Of whome she desyred / with humble reuerence
And synguler supplycacyon / to haue fre lysence
At Canwod abbay / to enter relygyon
Whiche the kynge graunted / for her deuocyon.

Saynt Ebba syster / unto saynt Oswolde
Was abbesse and ruler / of that congregacyon
Where blessed Audry / ryght as she wolde
Was reuerently receyued / into relygyon
And after the yere / of her probacyon
Professed there was / by bysshop Wylfryde
Where all worldly honours / she set on syde.

Frome thens she departed / to the yle of Ely
More quyetly to lyue / out of busynesse
For drede of the kynge / her husbande truly
Purposynge to take her / frome that holynesse
She toke two maydens / with her doubtlesse
And in theyr Journay / our lorde of his grace
Shewed dyuers myracles / at eche restynge place.

The archebyſſhop of yorke / Wylfryde her confeſſour
Was deprɣued frome his benyfyce / by the kynge cruelly
Obſerued pacyence / laudynge our ſauyour
And folowed ſaynt Audry / to the place of Ely
Whiche (as afore is ſayd) was her Joynt and dowry
And electe her abbeſſe / on that congregacyon
Mooſt worthy to be / for her holy conuerſacyon.

Where Audry buylded / a chyrche of our lady
With helpe of kynge Aldulph / her brother naturall
Diſtaunt a myle / frome the olde monaſtery
Founded by ſaynt Auſtyn / for meryte ſpyrytuall
Whiche place all deſolate / ſhe edyfyed full ſpecyall
By her prouyſyon / an other noble monaſtery
The yere of grace / fyue hundreth ſeuenty and thre.

Whan the werke was ended / as her wyll was
She endowed the abbay / with fraunches and lyberte
And gaue the hole yle of Ely / to that place
With all commodytes / profettes / and yſſues fre
Frome all exaccyons / exempte clerely to be
Of kynge and byſſhop / confyrmed it at Rome
With all prelates & princes / conſentynge of this regyon.

In ſhort tyme and ſpace / to Audry dyd reſorte
Relygyous men and women / a great company
Profeſſed in that place / for theyr ghoſtly conforte
Renounſynge vayne pleaſures / & honours tranſſytory
Amonge whome ſaynt Werburge / profeſſed ſolemply
Promyſed in audyence / to lyue a lyfe moneſtycall
After ſaynt Benettes rule / for the lyfe eternall.

Also the yere of grace / lyxe hundreth leuenty and nyne
In the moneth of Julii / in the nynth kalendas
To heuen departed / laynt Audry the quene
Than reygnynge in Kent / kynge Lothary by grace
Aldulph in eeft Englande / her brother whiche was
Kynge Offryde her hulbande / in Northumberlande
Also kynge Ethelrede / than reygnynge in Mercelande

¶ A breue reherlal of ye lyfe of laynt Serburge / graūd mother to laynt Werburge. And of her comynge to Ely to her lyfter Audry from Shepay monaftery. Ca. xix.

The holy matrone / and quene laynt Serburge
A kynges doughter / & moder to kynges twayne
Syfter to laynt Audry / & graundmother to Werburge
Of noble parentage / is comen certayne
Of two realmes delcendynge / lynyally and playne
By her father / from the realme of eeft Englande
And by her mother / frome Northumberlande.

Her father laynt Anna / as layth myne auctour
Was kynge of the eeft parte / lone to Egnicius
Whiche Anna was maryed / with moche honour
To Herelwith / doughter to kynge Herericius
And lyfter to laynt Hylde / the vyrgyn gracyous
To whome laynt Edwyn / the glorious martyr
Kynge of Northumberlande / was great graundfather.

This layd kynge Anna / lyued a longe lpace
In welthe / worlhyp / honour / and prolperyte
With his quene Herelwith / by lynguler grace
Obleruynge Juftyce / pacyence / and equyte

Kepte the preceptes / of god almyghte
Mercyfull and lyberall / to the poore in payne
Whiche kynge by Penda / was murdred and slayne.

As the ryuer passeth / oftetymes the heed fountayne
The lytell grafte or ympe / transcendeth the tree
Lykewyse theyr chyldren / encresed certayne
In mekenes / pacyence / and perfyte charyte
Aboue theyr parentes / in vertue and benygnyte
So that theyr name / lynage / and hye astate
By them was magnyfyed / prayfed and decorate.

Kynge Anna and Herelwith / had a noble yssue
Syxe goodly chyldren / pleasaunt to beholde
None fayrer in this lande / myndynge all vertue
And to all good maners / dyspoled manyfolde
yet was theyr fayrenes / not equall to be tolde
To theyr deuocyon / and synguler goodnes
Whole names expressed / ben afore doubtles.

Serburge the eldest / of the systers all
Instructe by her parentes / in vertuous dyscyplyne
Folowynge theyr counsell / in herte full specyall
Prepared her soule / after theyr doctryne
For aboue the age / of so yonge a femynyne
So that euery day / by grace and wysdome
In her dyd growe / some plant of deuocyon.

In all this realme / dylated was her fame
That whan she approched / vnto lawfull aege
Prynces / dukes / erles / herynge of her name
Desyred to haue Serburge / in maryage
Werburge. g.iii.

And busyly laboured / vnto her parentage
This mayd was maryed / with honour full excellent
Unto Ercombert / the noble kynge of Kent.

To whome kynge Ethelbryct / graundfather was
The fyrst chrysten kynge / of Saxons and chefe floure
Baptysed by saynt Austyn / thrughe heuenly grace
He was to holy chyrche / a specyall benefactour
Monasteryes and pryores / foūded with great honoure
Kynge Eadbalde his sone / exemple of hym toke
Whiche was father to Ercombert / as sayth my boke.

This lady Serburge / cyrcumfulsed with grace
After her desyre / and vertuous entent
Had leuer the monastery / than the fayre palace
The chyrche to bysyte / than with maryage be lent
But to her parentes / she was euer obedyent
Folowynge theyr counseyll / and of her frendes dere
In lawfull maryage / toke the sayd kynge her fere.

A noble generacyon / she hadde by the kynge
Egbryct and Lothary / two prynces prepotent
And two holy doughters / in vertue shynynge
Ermenylde and Erkengode / by lynyall descent
This Ermenylde maryed / with honour equyualent
Unto kynge Wulfer / had a royall yssue
The glorious Werburge / replete with vertue.

Her syster Erkengode / refused vtterly
Honours / worshyp / and worldly possessyon
Ryches / maryage / and pleasures transytory
Went vnto Fraunce / with humble deuocyon

At the Cytee of Burges / entred relygyon
Where Ethelberge her aunt / was ruler and abbesse
Togyder they lyued / in perfyte holynesse.

This honorable Seyburge / and blessed matrone
Refusynge worldly honours / and solempnyte
Preferred mekenesse / and perfyte deuocyon
Above all ryches / power and dygnyte
Auoyded ambycyon / obserued humylyte
Upon poore people / euer had compassyon
And them releued / with due mynystracyon.

She made her palace / manytymes an hospytall
Her pryvate cubycle / a deuoute oratory
As a kynde mother amyable / in courte and in hall
Mekely fulfylled / the seuen werkes of mercy
Oftetymes in the chyrche / selde amonge compainy
yet euer whan she myght / haue tyme and space
Magnyfyed and praysed / our lorde in secrete place.

She instructe her husbande / in ghostly vertu
To great holynesse / and synguler perfeccyon
So by her counseyll / with the grace of Jhesu
Frome infydelyte / purged was that regyon
Destroyed theyr ydolles / theyr sectes euerychone
Restaured temples / vnto chystes honour
Founded monasteryes / by her cost and labour.

The kynge by her mocyon / commaunded straytly
All his people and subiectes / vpon sharpe correccyon
To obserue prayer / and penaunce deuoutely
And truly for to fast / the holy tyme of Lenton

Werburge. g.iiii.

The archbyſſhop Theodorus / and fathers of relygyon
Conſyderynge her pacyence / and benygnyte
Reioyſed in her dedes / and prayſed the trynyte.

Whan the famous Ercombert / the ſayd kynge of Kent
Foure & twenty yere had reygned / in honour full royall
With bleſſed Sexburge / his quene excellent
Than he departed / frome this lyfe mortall
The quene prepared / the obſequyes funerall
With great lamentacyon / and great royalte
As was conuenyent / for his ſtate and degre.

After that Sexburge / refuſed worldely pleaſure
Entred relygyon / profeſſed chaſtyte
At Shepay monaſtery / in Kent full ſure
Buylded at her coſt / full honorable
After electe Abbeſſe / and ruler of that companye
To whome ſhe was / a myrrour of mekenes
And exemple of vertue / and proued holynes.

As ſhe was occupyed / in medytacyon
An heuenly meſſanger / to her was ſent
Shewynge how for ſynne / and tranſgreſſyon
Englande ſhulde ſuffer / great punyſment
And be ſubdued / with greuous torment
Wherfore ſhe lefte / in good rule that place
And dyd electe to them / an other abbace.

Sexburge toke lycence / of her ſyſters all
Commendynge them / vnto the trynyte
And ſo departed / fro her chyldren ſpyrytuall
With labour attayned / to the hous of Elye

There to be subiecte / to Her syster Audrye
And to her doctryne / apply her entent
Unto relygyon / euer founde obedyent.

Saynt Audry was gladde / of her systers comynge
In lyke maner / were all the hole congregacyon
With mythes and solace / in soule reioysynge
To haue the presence / of so worthy a persone
There lyued togyder / in perfyte deuocyon
Tyll blessed Audry / frome this lyfe mortall
Departed was / to the lyfe eternall.

After whole buryall / Sexburge was electe
To be abbesse and ruler / ouer that couent
Whiche to all vertue / her mynde dyd erecte
And the.xvi.yere after / with labours dylygent
She translate saynt Audry / that noble presydent
Beynge hole incorrupte / also substancyall
In body and in vesture / by grace supernall.

¶ How saynt Ermenylde after the dethe of kynge Aulfer her husbāde was made a nonne at Ely / vnder her mother saynt Sexburge abbesse / and Werburge her deuoute doughter. Ca.xx.

Of Mercyēs the kynge / whā the forsayd Aulfere
Had regned in honour / worshyp and royalte
With saynt Ermenylde his quene / fully.xvii.yere
Unto euerlastynge blysse / departed than he
And buryed was / with moche solempnyte
In Lychefelde chyrche / after hym there dyd succede
Into the kyngdome / his brother Ethelrede.

The quene for her husbande / made great lamentacyon
Dolefully lamentynge / nyght and day his departure
As nature enquyred / endurynge a longe season
Remayned in wydohode / and mournynge besture
yet after all heuynesse / penaunce / and dysconfyture
She reioyced in soule / to be at lyberte
Entendynge relygyon / by grace of the trynyte.

Soone she departed / to the hous of Ely
Refusynge this worlde / pleasures possessyon
Instauntly requyred / with perfyte humylyte
To be a moynes / accepte in relygyon
Gladde was the abbesse / of her conuersyon
And thanked our lorde / of his specyall grace
So dyd all the systers / within the sayd place.

Her naturall mother / blessed Serburge
That tyme was lady / and chefe presydent
There was professed / her doughter Werburge
An exemple of mekenes / to all the couent
Ermenylde thanked god / and was obedyent
To her mother Serburge / a myrrour of vertu
Also to her doughter / the spouses of Jhesu.

It passeth mannes reason / playnly to expresse
Her vertuous lyfe / and ghostly conuersacyon
In prayer / penaunce / and proued mekenesse
In perfyte obedyence / and synguler deuocyon
In vygyls / abstynence / and in hye perfeccyon
The cotydyane labours / her body to chastyce
That her soule may be / to god true sacrifyce.

By cause that Werburge / in order was senyoure
Her mother Ermenylde / gaue her the sufferaynte
Preferrynge her doughter / with mekenes and honoure
But yet her doughter / of a naturall amyte
Preferred her mother / with humble senyorite
And so bytwene them / was a swete contencyon
Wheder shulde more subiecte be / to other in relygyon.

Afore whan Ermenylde / was vnder maryage
Unto holy matrones / she was comparable
Sara / Rebecca / Rachell / and Sybell sage
And saynt Elysabeth / with other mo honorable
Now in relygyon / she is moost notable
Knowen by her vertues / and sadde dyspolycyon
What vnder matrymony / was her intencyon.

Ermenylde subdued / by synguler deuyne grace
All fragyll mocyons / and sensualyte
Lyke maner as Judyth / Olofernes slayne hace
She mortyfyed all pleasures / lustes and volupte
Lykewyse as Jaell / dyd the prynce Sysare
A duches of vertue / as whylom was Delbora
Used the oratory / in prayer as dyd Anna.

After the departure / and wofull buryall
Of Serburge her mother / abbesse and lady
Her doughter Ermenylde / the blessed monyall
Was chosen abbesse / and ruler of Ely
As sheweth dan Wyllyam / of Malvysbury
How kynst was Audry / than Serburge her syster
Afterwarde was abbesse / Ermenylde her doughter.

The lyfe of Ermenylde / was euer vertuous
Pleasaunt to god / and her syſters euerychone
In the ſyght of god / her dethe was precyous
Playnly notyfyed / by her conuerſacyon
Shye vertuouſly gouerned / her congregacyon
Frome this lyfe departed / to eternall glory
As ſayth her legende / the Idus of February.

And buryed was / with moche lamentacyon
In the holy monaſtery / and houſe of Ely
Amonge her parentage / and congregacyon
Where ſhe is ſhryned / with her aunt ſaynt Audry
And with her mother / ſaynt Serburge rychely
For whome our ſauyour / of his ſpecyall grace
Sheweth dayly myracles / in that ſayd place.

One of the myracles / we ſhall now rehers
Our lorde for her ſhewed / at Ely abbay
After her tranſlacyon / the ſtory dothe expres
It fortuned in Whytſon weke / vpon a thurſday
An Engliſſhman was bounden / in wofull aray
Fetered with yrons / bothe on handes and fete
Wrongfully accuſed / as ye may all wete.

By inſtaunt requeſt / he gate hym lycence
To vyſyte the tombe / of ſaynt Ermenylde
Whome he requyred / with humble reuerence
And meke petycyon / frome the herte full mylde
To be delyuered / and fully reconſylde
Whoſe humble deſyre / and ſynguler ſupplycacyon
Was fully graunted / to his conſolacyon.

At this tyme / whan this holy man was prayenge
Whan the Deken redde the holy gospell
By meane of Ermenylde / to our lorde and kynge
Frome his handes and fete / the yrons done fell
By grace aboue nature / merueylously to tell
That the sayd yrons / in syght of all the bretherne
Sprange vp sodenly / and lyght vpon the aulter.

¶ Aliud miraculum.

An other myracle / declare now may we
Done at the sayd Ely / by this holy matrone
In presence of the pryor / and all the fraternyte
Whiche pryor of this mater / had best notycyon
A scole mayster of Innocentes / after the custome
Gaue lysence / vpon saynt Ermenyldes day
To all his chyldren / to sport them in play.

Whan the feest / and solempnyte was done
The yonge tender chyldren / wanton and neclygent
Dredynge theyr mayster / for fere of correccyon
To the holy shryne / they assembled full dylygent
Trustynge therby of pardon / after theyr entent
Desyred theyr mayster / for saynt Ermenyldes sake
To pardon theyr trespas / and no dysplea sure take.

The mayster fulfylled / with hastynes and euny
Toke them frome the tombe / with great indygnacyon
Without dyscrecyon / punysshed them greuously
Gyuynge no honour / to the saynt ne deuocyon
Rebuked them sore / sayenge with insultacyon
Trowe ye to be spared / from punyshment this day
For saynt Ermenyldes sake / nay nay do way.

After all this done / the nexte nyght folowynge
Whan the sayd mayster / to his bedde was gone
His great vnkyndenes / saynt Ermenylde remēbrynge
Rewarned hym Justly / after his guerdon
His handes and his fete / prompte to persecucyon
Were sodenly smytten / made lame / contracte also
No power had to ryse / to moeue nor to go.

This sodayne punysshement / langour / confusyon
Vexed hym greuously in all his body
Moost terryble of all / of helthe desperacyon
Inwardly hym troubled / with peynes horryble
But yet by grace / he thought best remedy
Sende for his chyldren / vpon the other day
Humble asked them pardon / in a wofull aray.

Desyrynge his scolers / for loue and charyte
To cary hym moost carefull / to her sepulture
To requyre for hym grace / helthe and prosperyte
Of god and saynt Ermenylde / with all theyr cure
They toke hym tenderly / ye may me leue full sure
Amonge them all / with mynde dylygent
And brought to the shryne / this wretched impotent.

They prayed for hym / to our blessed sauyour
And to saynt Ermenylde / a longe tyme and space
Knelynge on theyr knees / weppynge full sore
In prayer and psalmody / for his helthe and solace
And so contynuynge / by our lordes great grace
He that afore was lame / bothe on fote and hande
Restored to helthe / departed hole and sounde.

¶ How kynge Ethelrede seynge the holy conuersacyo
of Werburge his nece / made her lady and abbesse at Ti
don / Trentam / and Humbury. And by her coũseyll a
exsample was made mõke at Bardeney abbay. Ca.x

The famous prynce / and foresayd Ethelrede
Brother to kyng Wulfer / as lawfull enherytour
To the sayd kyngedome / dyd nerte hym succede
Electe of his peeres / with worshyp and honour
Permytted by his chyrche / to be theyr gouernour
Bycause prynce Kenrede / his brother sone
Was yonge and not able / to rule his kyngdome.

This sayd kynge Ethelrede / clerely consyderynge
With due circumstaunce / the hye perfeccyon
Of Werburge his nece / and vertuous lyuynge
Her great holynesse / and ghostly conuersacyon
Dayly encresynge / with feruent deuocyon
The excellent fame / and myracles full ryght
Shewed by our sauyour / bothe day and nyght.

These good exsamples / grounded in vertu
Moeued kynge Ethelrede / in soule and in mynde
And clerely conuerted / throwe the grace of Jhesu
To despyse this worlde / wretched and blynde
Pryncypally by grace / wryten as we fynde
For her great goodnes / and vertues excellent
He made her lady / ruler / and presydent.

Ouer all the nonnes / of euery monastery
Within his realme / to gouerne and to guyde
To instructe and informe / and to exemplyfy

To encrese deuocyon / vpon euery syde
Vertue to exalte / to subdue vyce and pryde
That holy relygyon / pleasaunt to chryst Jhesu
Myght dayly encrese / frome vertu to vertu.

Also he gaue Werburge / great possessyon
Landes / and rentes / ryches withall
To edyfy and repayre / places of relygyon
After her desyre / with fauour specyall
Wherwith she buylded / famous memoryall
Two fayre monasteryes / Trentam and Humbury
Possessed with rentes / landes / and lyberte.

Also by sufferaunce / of the sayd kynge truly
She translate the kynges maner of Wedon
Whiche was in Hamptonshyre / vnto a monastery
Of holy women / obseruynge relygyon
Sufficyently endowed / with lybertes / possessyon
Of whiche sayd places / she had the gouernaunce
As worthy maystres / all vertue to auaunce.

The yere of grace / syxe hundreth foure score and nyen
As sheweth myne auctour / a Bryton Giraldus
Kynge Ethelred / myndynge moost the blysse of heuen
Edyfyed a collage chyrche / notable and famous
In the subbarbes of Chester / pleasaunt and beauteous
In the honour of god / and the Baptyst saynt Johan
With helpe of bysshop Aulfryce / and good exortacyon.

Also at the humble / and synguler supplycacyon
Of blessed Cgwyn / bysshop of worcestur
This kynge gaue a place / for a fundacyon

To buylde a monaſtery / to relygyous bretheur
At Eueſam vpon Auen / for heuenly treſur
With a large precynct / to compas all the abbay
More quyetly to ſerue / our ſauyour nyght and day.

After this tyme / Ethelrede the kynge
By his counſeyll maryed / a beautefull lady
Called quene Oſtryde / a woman of good lyuynge
Borne in the North parte / doughter to kynge Oſwy
To whome ſaynt Oſwalde / was vncle truly
The yſſue betwene them / after to ſuccede
Was a noble prynce / nomynate Colrede.

Agaynſt his enemyes / the kynge gate victory
Fortunate in batayle / ſore oppreſſed Kent
In all this regyon / famous was his chyualry
Namely he ſubdued / at the water of Trent
Egfryde of Northumberlande / a kynge auncyent
His brother in lawe / whan Egfryde agaynſt reaſon
Entred his landes / by ſubtyll intruſyon.

But after that Oſtryde / his quene was ſlayne
By people of the North parte / moſt cruelly
The kynge frome that tyme / by grace certayne
Chaunged his maners / and lyuynge dayly
Frome temporall cures / and buſyneſſe worldly
To ghoſtly werkes / and contemplacyon
Sekynge for heuen / with pure deuocyon.

Specyally he folowed / ſaynt Werburge counſell
Vſynge hym after / her ſwete ghoſtly doctryne
The clere exſamples / as we afore dyd tell
Werburge. h.i.

Moeued his conscyence / to ghostly dyscyplyne
With suche contrycyon / by specyall grace deuyne
That all vayne pleasures / and honours transytory
Were clere expulsed / and put out of memory.

This kynge refused / his sceptre and crowne
Clothes of Tyshew / and purpull full royall
With ryches / lybertes / pleasures / possessyon
For the loue of Jhesu / in herte pryncyppall
And for the meryte / of his soule helthe withall
So whan he had reygned / nyne and twenty yere
He chaunged his habyte / sayth the story clere.

At a relygyous place / nomynate Bardenay
In Lyncolne shyre / vnder his domynyon
Synguler byloued / of hym alway
Desyred the habyte / with meke supplycacyon
And was receyued / professynge relygyon
Euer after to obserue / the essencyals thre
Obedyence / chastyte / and wylfull pouerte.

He assygned his crowne / and temporall dygnyte
Unto prynce Kenrede / his brother sone
As true enherytour / to haue regalyte
For in pure obedyence / prayer and medytacyon
Ethelrede encresed / with feruent deuocyon
And as declareth / wyllyam of Malmysbury
After was made abbot / of the sayd monastery.

¶ The holy conuersacyon of kynge Kenred brother to saynt Werburge / & how he refused his crowne / and was made monke at Rome / & ther departed a holy cōfessour.
Ca. xrii.

SO whan kynge Ethelrede / by heuenly grace
At Bardenay abbay / profelled relygyon
Than prynce Kenrede / his ſucceſſour was
And toke the Empyre / the ſceptre and the crowne
With moche worſhyp / royalte / and renowne
As nexte of inherytaunce / by law naturall
To be kynge of Mercyens / by dyſcent lynyall.

This noble kynge Kenrede / replete with vertu
Brother to Werburge / obſerued truly
The commaundymentes of god / & his lawes mooſt tru
Obedyent to our ſauyour / and lorde almyghty
Loued holy chyrche / mooſt tenderly
Mynyſtred Juſtyce / to his ſubiectes all
Mercyfull to the poore / pyteous and lyberall.

In all his realme / was no dyuerſyte
Malyce was ſubdued / rancour and debate
Vertue encreaſed / true loue and charyte
Enuy was exyled / and all pryuy hate
Theefte / murthur / robry / were founde at no gate
True men myght lyue / without veracyon
Pollers / promoters / had no domynacyon.

He gaue to our ſauyour / and byſſhop Egwyn
For ghoſtly meryte / with moche honoure
Of tenementes and landes / playnely to determyne
Within worceturſhyre. iiii. ſcore and foure
To maynteyne the monaſtery / ſpoken of before
Euesham vpon Auen / byfore lawfull wytnes
As the legende of Egwyn / truly dothe expres.

To the courte of Rome / kynge Kenred went
So dyd Offa kynge / of the eeſt Sarons
Alſo byſſhop Egwyn / by one aſſent
Deuoutly to viſyte / all the hole ſtacyons
Of the cytee of Rome / with humble ſupplycacyons
Thankynge our lorde / of his mercy
Hath them preſerued / and all theyr company.

This holy byſſhop / and kynge Kenrede
Offered to our holy father / pope boneface
With mekenes deuocyon / for ghoſtly mede
Afore his collage / wytnes in that caſe
The foreſayd monaſtery / and relygyous place
Frome that day euer after / to be clerely exempte
To the popes holynes / immedyatly obedyent.

Whan they had optayned / perfyte expedycyon
Of all theyr bulles / after theyr entent
They toke lycence / and had the popes beneſon
And towarde Englãde / retourned and went
Prayſynge our lorde / with herte and loue feruent
For theyr good ſpede / and proſperous Journay
Preſerued in good helthe / all to theyr countray.

After all this done / Kenrede the ſayd kynge
Commaunded to be had / a counſeyll generall
By letters myſſyue / his peeres and lordes cytynge
Shortly to be preſent / with hym one and all
As well the ſpyrytualte / as the temporall
The Seyn was kepte / at a place called Alue
And thyder aſſembled / his prelates of degre.

Berthtunaldus / the archebyſſhop of Canturbury
The archbyſſhop of yorke / called Wylfryde
With byſſhops / ſuffreganes / archdekens many
Dukes / erles / barons / vpon euery ſyde
Knyghtes / eſquyers / and comunes that tyde
Were redy to knowe / the kynges mynde and pleaſure
Well ordred in place / and ſcylence kepte ſure.

This glorious Kenrede / crowned with golde
Clothed in purpull / roſe vp fro his place
After due ſalutacyon / the cauſe mekely he tolde
Why he for them ſende / and wherfore it was
That they ſhulde teſtyfy / with hym in this caſe
What landes he gaue / towarde the fundacyon
Of the ſayd monaſtery / with grete deuocyon.

And how for that abbay / he went to Rome
And made the place ſubiecte / immedyatly
To our father boniface / and gate an exempcyon
For euer to remayne / to the ſayd monaſtery
With pardons and pryuyleges / there redde openly
And many other benefytes / of great commodyte
Wryten in theyr grauntes / who lyſt them to ſe.

Requyrynge the lordes / ſpyrytuall and temporall
To graunte to the ſame / with good entent
And it to confyrme / and roborate ſpecyall
With charters and dedes / and ſeales patent
To whoſe petycyon / they dyd all conſent
Made confyrmacyons / and grauntes them amonge
With a terryble ſentence / who dothe the place wronge.

Kynge Kenrede conſyderynge / the great holynes
Of his noble parentes / his vncles euerychone
Theyr royall progeny / the ſufferaunt goodnes
From this lyfe tranſytory / to heuen agone
Namely the vertue / and feruent deuocyon
Of his ſyſter Werburge / and his auntes all
Moeued his mynde / to ſeke for lyfe eternall.

And as ſaynt Bede ſayth / whan this noble kynge
Had regned fyue yere / in great proſperyte
He forſoke this worlde / and chaunged his lyuynge
Refuſynge his crowne / ſceptre / and dygnyte
All vayne honours / ryches and regalyte
And made his vncles ſone / prynce Coelrede
To take his empyre / after hym to ſuccede.

So with all gentylnes / and humylyte
The kynge of his ſubiectes / toke leue ſpecyall
Commendynge his people / to the trynyte
Them to conſerue / ſpyrytuall and temporall
Of his departure / dolorous were they all
Thus for the loue / of our ſauyoure
He refuſed this worlde / pleaſures and honoure.

And went to Rome agayne / the yere of grace
Seuen hundreth and eyght / by full computacyon
Vyſytynge the ſtacyons / frome place to place
There was profeſſed / to ſaynt Benettes relygyon
Vſed vygyls / faſtynges / prayer / medytacyon
Where this holy monke / frome this lyfe tranſytory
With vertu departed / to eternall glory.

¶ Of ye feruent & ghoſtly deuocyon of ſaynt Werburge & vertuous gouernaūce of her places/& of ye great humilite ſhe vſed to her ſiſters/& al other creatures. Ca.xxiii.

This venerable Werburge/& moynes gracyous
For her great vertue/and perfyte holyneſſe
Electe to be gouernour/ouer the nonnes relygeous
By her vncle kynge Ethelrede/of his goodneſſe
Ouer dyuers monaſteryes (as is ſayd) expreſſe
Was conſecrate abbeſſe/and lady gracyous
By the byſſhop of Lychefelde/nomynat Serwulfus.

And thus ſhe departed/fro the hous of Ely
Wherin ſhe vſed/heuenly medytacyon
With lycence optayned/in mynde ſad and heuy
So were the ſyſters/and all the congregacyon
Of her departure/knowynge her conuerſacyon
But as wolde charyte/they had great gladnes
Knowynge by her vertue/relygyon to encres.

The ſpouſes of Jheſu/and floure of benygnyte
Conſyderynge her ſelfe/a lady and preſydent
Ordered her monaſteryes: ryght well and wyſele
Receyued in ſyſters/chaſt/humble/obedyent
Ouer them made rulers/vertuous/and pacyent
Her ſubiectes to inſtructe/and counſeyll day and nyght
Vertue to exalte/and vyce depryue aryght.

This noble abbeſſe/remembrynge her duty
What charge it is/to rule a congregacyon
Humble requyred the grace of god almyghty
And dylygently prepared/to ſupple her rowme.

Pryncypally she gaue / to them euerychone
Perfyte exsample / of vertue in her dede
With vertuous doctryne / the same to procede.

A myrrour of mekenesse / she was to them all
A floure of chastyte / and well of clennes
The fruyte of obedyence / in her was specyall
Refusynge vayne pleasures / honours and ryches
Content with lytell / an exsample of lowlynes
As dothe belonge / vnto wylfull pouerte
Pryde ha no resydence / but all humylyte.

She was a mynyster / rather than a maystres
Her great preemynence / caused no presumpcyon
She was a handmayd / rather than a pryores
Seruynge her systers / with humble subiecccyon
Subduynge her body / to penaunce and afflyccyon
Subiecte to the soule / as reason wolde shulde be
A true sacryfyce / offered to the trynyte.

It was no meruell / tho all her couent
Vnder suche a ruler / encreased in vertu
Seynge her exsample / afore them dayly present
Euer augmentynge / thowe the helpe of Jhesu
Worldly desyres / she clerely dyd subdue
She neuer ware lynon / by day or by nyght
All ryche vayne vestures / she set by them but lyght.

In prayer medytacyon / the tyme she dyspent
Proued: for euery nyght / longe afore matyns
She wolde vpryse / at an houre conuenyent
And deuoutely say / afore our lordes presens

Dauyd ſpalter holly knelynge / with great reuerence
Or that her ſyſters / came to the oratory
To ſay dyuyne ſeruyce / kyndynge her all redy.

At after matyns / ſhe vſed contemplacyon
Contynually abydynge / vnto the day lyght
Proſtrate on the grounde / or knelynge in deuocyon
Wepynge full tenderly / with teeres downeryght
Many holy orayſons / ſhe ſayd day and nyght
Pyteous / mercyable / and fulll of charyte
To the poore people / in theyr neceſſyte.

This lady obſerued / ſuche ſharpe abſtynence
That one dayly repaſt / wolde her well ſuffyſe
Delycate dyſſhe meates / were put out of her preſence
So nature were content / in mooſt humble wyſe
The Worde of god / was mooſt delycate ſeruyſe
Myndynge moche more / the ſoule to ſatyſfy
Than pleaſe and content / her enemy the body.

Theſe ſayd exemples / with many other mo
Pleaſaunte vnto Jheſu / ſhe taught her couent
Them to preſerue / frome theyr mortall fo
By ſynguler vertue / grace to augment
Her precepte and lyuynge / were euer correſpondent
She neuer commaunded ſyſter / do any thynge
But it was fulfylled / in her owne doynge.

She exorted her chyldren / euer to deuocyon
With manyfolde doctrynes / ydlenes to exchewe
Lyke a tender mother / had pyte and compaſſyon
She dayly fedde them / and nouryſſhed in all vertue
Werburge. i.i.

And dylygently prayed / our ſauyour Jheſu
Them to preſerue / of his infynyte grace
Frome peryll of perylhynge / in blyſſe to ſe his face.

Alſo the. xii. degrees / of humylyte
Pacyence / quyetnes / and great perfeccyon
Were well obſerued / with true loue and charyte
Amonge her ſyſters / the hole congregacyon
And the thre eſſencyals / of relygyon
Wylfull pouerte / chaſtyte / and obedyence
were truly fulfylled / proued by the conſequence.

As for a paſtyme / amonge her ſyſters all
She cauſed to be redde / auoydynge ydleneſſe
The ſwete legendary / for a memoryall
And Vitas patrum / shewynge great ſweteneſſe
With other narracyons / of grace and goodneſſe
Dttymes to her couent / she had a comyn ſayenge
Pleaſe god and loue hym / and doubte ye nothynge.

All reders excuſe me / tho J can not expreſſe
For lacke of lernynge / the vertues moral
The hye perfeccyon / and proued holyneſſe
Of this pure vyrgyn / and ſanctymonyall
Wherwith was decorate / her lyfe moneſtycall
Manyfeſt With myracles / by meryte of her mekeneſſe
As the true hyſtory / playnly dothe expreſſe.

The worthy myracles / of this vyrgyn pure
Dylated were / thrugh all this regyon
By deuyne ſufferaunce / aboue nature
Profytable / to euery chriſten ſynguler perſone

In ſekeneſſe / trouble / peyne or veracyon
Of her they haue refuge / helpe / and ſocoure
By her merytes / and prayer / that euery honoure.

Her merytes were / moche more commendable
Than were her myracles / manyfeſt and playne
For why by her merytes / famous and notable
Sygnes and myracles / were ſhewed full playne
In the houſe of Ely / bythe grace of our ſufferayne
And in euery place / where ſhe kepte reſydence
Of whome parte folowen / in this rude ſentence.

¶ How at Wedon wylde gees were pynned by her com maundyment / & alſo releſhed & put at lyberte. Ca.xxiiii.

THis holy vyrgyn / whan ſhe dwelled at Wedon
In Northamptonſhyre / with a deuoute couent
Whiche place ſomtyme / was the kynges manſyon
Tranſlated to an abbay / by her commaundyment
A myracle was done / by this noble preſydent
As the true legende / playnly dothe vs ſay
And all the inhabytauntes / vnto this preſent day.

A great multytude / ſomtyme of wylde gees
Comunely called Gauntes / made a great deſcrypcyon
Upon her landes / paſtures / waters / and feldes
Deuourynge the cornes / and fruytes of Wedon
Greuous to her ſubiectes / within that poſſeſſyon
The people coude fynde / no ſuffycyent remedy.
But ſhewed theyr complaynte / to Werburge theyr lady.

Whan Werburge had herde / this greuous complayne

How the cornes were wasted / ye tenauntes hurte therby
Her herte was moeued / with charyte than certayne
To saue her fruytes / and helpe her company
Wherfore she commaunded a seruaunt go hastely
To dryue those wylde gees / & bryngе home to her place
There to be pynned / and punysshed for theyr trespace.

The messanger merueyled / and mused in his mynde
Of this straunge message / stode styll in a study
Knowynge it well / it passed course of kynde
Wylde gees for to pynne / by any mannes polycy
Syth nature hath ordeyned / suche brydes to fly
Suppolynge his lady / had ben vnreasonable
Commaundynge to do / a thynge vnpossyble.

With wordes of confort / she sayd to hym agayne
Go in my name / do my commaundyment
The seruaunt went forth / thynkynge all but vayne
Unto the foldes / where the brydes were lent
And sayd his message / with mynde and good entent
My lady commaundes you / brydes euerychone
Afore me to go / vnto her proper mansyone.

A merueylous thynge / transcendynge nature
Unto his wordes / the gees were obedyent
Not one departed / fro thens ye may besure
Of all the nombre / that there were present
Towarde her place / afore hym they went
Mekely / as yf they had reason naturall
Unto her presence / he brought the gauntes all.

Dredefully darynge / comen now they be

Theyr wynges traylynge / entred into the hall
For great confulyon / after theyr kynde and propryte
Mournynge in theyr maner / abydynge one and all
Her wyll and Judgment / with mercy fpecyall
Lamentynge all nyght / there in captyuyte
Tyll the morowe after / withouten lyberte.

All that fame nyght / Werburge dyd contynue
In deuoute prayers / and ympnes celeftyall
After her olde cuftome / vfed in all vertue
In the mornynge after / the bydes that were thall
With hye voyces (as yf it were) on her dyd call
For grace and pardon / of theyr offence
And of departure / to haue fre lycence.

Than fhe full pyteous / to euery creature
Upon thefe bydes haupnge conpaffyon
Delyuered them / frome all daunger and cure
Frely to departe / vnder this condycyon
That none of them / vpon the lordfhyp of Wedon
Shulde make deftruccyon / nor lyght by any way
On cornes or fruytes / neuer after that day.

Neuertheles a feruaunt / one of the gees dyd take
And pryuely hydde it / agaynft iuftyce and ryght
Unknowynge to Werburge / fuche bybry to make
The bydes departed / mooft glad to take theyr flyght
From theyr tender Judge / but whan they fawe in fyght
One of theyr felawes / taken frome theyr company
The fayd great nombre / of gees retourned haftely.

They flewe ouer / this bleffed bygyns hall
Werburge. i.iii.

Mournynge and waylynge / after theyr entent
And wolde not departe / but fast on her dyd call.
yet they durst not lyght / for drede of her cōmaundyment
But in theyr maner & kynde they sayd / o swete presydent
Why suffer ye suche wyckednes / done for to be
Anendes our felawe / agaynst all ryght and charyte.

Werburge went fyrst / to knowe wherfore and why
These bydes retourned / so haskely certayne
By grace she perceyued / the cause of it truly
And tryed out the truthe / of all the mater playne
She restaured the byde / to his felyshyp agayne
And gaue them a lesson / or they went her fro
How they shulde prayse / theyr maker and sufferayne
Sayenge (benedicite volucres celi domino)

But as Wyllyam Malvysbury / sheweth expresse
The goos that was taken / and stollen afore away
Was rosted and eten / the same nyght doubtlesse
So whan it was asked / for vpon the other day
The bare bones were brough / after this lady veray
And there by the vertue / of her benedyccyon
The byde was restaured / and flewe away full soone.

Certaynly frome that tyme / vnto this present day
As all the people knowe / dwellynge about Wedon
The foresayd wylde gees / attempten by no way
To hurte theyr fruytes / ne lyght in that possessyon
No merueyll it is / remembrynge the deuocyon
And true loue she had / to god omnypotent
For vnto vertue / all thynge is obedyent.

¶ How a tyraunt without pyte punyshynge an Innocent was punyshed / & after made hole. Ca.xxb.

FOrther to declare / the pacyence and humylyte
And the synguler grace / grounded in this abbas
As in the true legende / playnly ye may se
We shall parte rehers / to augment your solas
Werburge had a seruaunte / whiche named was
Alnotus a man / of meke conuersacyon
Knowen by his merytes / after due probacyon.

Also a baylyfe she had / a cruell tyraunt
Whiche pyteously punyshed / without reason
And wounded greuously / Alnot her seruaunt
Without any greuaunce / at the place of Wedon
Werburge for pyte / and great compassyon
Afore this caytyfe / kneled on her knee
Prayenge hym to cease / for loue of the trynyte.

Sayenge why does thou punyshe / this innocent
Causeles without mercy / whiche I byleue playne
Is more acceptable / to our lorde omnypotent
Than many other be / for his mekenesse certayne
The baylyfe at her prayer / wolde not refrayne
But punyshed hym styll / in his fury and pryde
Tyll the vengaunce of god / feil on hym that tyde.

Incontynente his heed / his necke / and his face
Were tourned backwarde / lyke a persone monstruous
Contrary to nature / for his great trespace
Crucyate with sorowe / and peynes hyduous
Contynually encrealynge / to beholde pyteous
Werburge. i.iiii.

At the laſt remembred / of the beſt remedy
Fell proſtrate to the fete / of Werburge his lady.

And cryed vpon her / with wofull chere
Wepynge / lamentynge / his great inquyte
My louely lady / and mayſtres mooſt dere
Helpe me ſwete abbeſſe / in this neceſſyte
I haue offended god / now pray for me
And I wyll neuer / endurynge all my lyfe
Dyſpleaſe no more / man / mayde / ne wyfe.

Whan Werburge conſydered / his great contrycyon
His woofull herte / and lamentable crye
Upon hym ſhe had / tender compaſſyon
Beholdynge his greuaunce / and tender agony
Good brother ſhe ſayd / who ſo wyll haue mercy
Muſt be mercyable / as in prouerbe wryten is
Who is without mercy / of mercy ſhall mys.

Call vnto mynde / thy owne wycked dede
In punyſhynge this poore man / without offence
To ſe his punyſhment / my herte ſore dyd blede
I kneled afore thy fete / deſyrynge indulgence
Thou toke no regarde / to my prayer ne preſence
Wherfore the Juſtyce / of god almyghty
Upon the is fallen / for thy ſynne ſodayly.

Whan ſhe had ended / her ghoſtly exortacyon
Perceyuynge hym penytent / with great humylyte
Gladde to amende / vyce and tranſgreſſyon
Anone vnto prayer / ſhe went with charyte
Opteyned forgyueneſſe / of the bleſſed trynyte

His kynnamy / reſtaured to his kynde agayne
Bothe bodyly and ghoſtly / cured was certayne.

This forelayd Alnotus / by ſynguler grace
Refuſed this worlde / pleaſures and vanyte
Went vnto wylderneſſe / and machoryte was
Whome theues martyred / to heuen blyſſe went he
At Stow beſyde Bukbrydge / buryed was trule
For whome our lorde / of his infynyte goodnes
Shewed many myracles / affyrmynge his holynes.

¶ How dyuers prynces folowynge ſenſualyte intendynge to violate this vyrgyn bi power / bi myracle were put to confuſyon. Ca. xxvi.

ANother ſygne was ſhewed / by the kynge of blys
Of a wanton prynce / folowynge ſenſualyte
And his fragyll appetyte / in doynge amys
Entendynge by violence / power / and auctoryte
To depryue Werburge / of her vyrgynyte
Eſpyed a ſeaſon / to fulfyll his entent
Whan ſhe was ſolytary / and no man there preſent.

By force than he began / this mayd to aſſayle
But ſhe truſtynge in god / to be her protectour
Eſcapynge his preſence / caſt her ſacrat vayle
For lyghtneſſe and eaſe / to fle from the traytour
The ſonne beame receyued it / whiche hāged that houre
Whiche myracle ſene / the prynce fledde away
The vyrgyn was preſerued / by grace that day.

¶ Another myracle / was done in Kent

In the byllage of Hoo / yet full memorous
A ſenſuall prynce / of wycked conſent
Purpoſed to maculate / this bygyn glorious
Conſyderynge her perſone / ſo fayre and beauteous
Caryed the ſeaſon / to fynde her ſolytary
By power to oppreſſe / this gracyous lady.

Whan the tyme was comen / he thought conuenyent
After her furyouſly / he ranne a faſt pace
She knowynge his mynde / add vnchaſt entent
Seynge no remedy / by man in that place
Called to our ſauyoure / for his helpe and grace
Sayenge bleſſed lorde / for thy endles pyte
Defende me this daye / and ſaue my chaſtyte.

And as ſhe fledde / frome this cruell perſone
She ranne for ſocour / to a great oke tree
By grace the ſayd tree / opened that ſame ſeaſon
Sufferynge this mayd / to haue ſure and fre entree
Wherby ſhe eſcaped his / wycked tyrannye
Whiche tree to this day / endurynge all the yere
By myracle is vernaunte / freſſhe / grene / and clere.

Of the ſayd oke tree / is a famous opynyon
That no man may entre / the ſayd concauyte
In deedly ſynne bounden / without contrycyon
But in clene perfyte lyfe / who ſoeuer he be
May entre the ſayd oke / with fre lyberte
And nygh to that place / a chyrche is now dedycate
In the honour of god / and werburge immaculate.

¶ Many other myracles / our bleſſed ſauyour

Shewed for this vyrgyn / of his goodnes
Confortе to the people / in sekenes and langour
That to her wyll seke / in theyr dystresse
Her excellent vertue / and great holynesse
By sygnes and myracles / were dayly manyfest
To many a creature / with peynes oppress.

The fame wherof sprange / so fast aboute
Notyfyed playne / in all this regyon
The people approched / withouten doubte
To knowe her blessed / and holy conuersacyon
And of these myracles / to haue probacyon
By the syght wherof / they myght all gloryfy
With ioy and gladnesse / our lorde god almyghty.

There was no sekenesse / nor infyrmyte
That mankynde had / nor veracyon
But by her prayer / and humylyte
Makynge for them / to our lorde intercessyon
They were restaured / to helthe and saluacyon
All by the meryte / of this vyrgyn pure
A synguler refuge / vnto euery creature.

To the dombe was gyuen / speche and language
To blynde theyr syght / to deke theyr herynge
To halte and lame people / helthe in euery aege
By deuyne grace / and her ghostly lyuynge
The people approchynge / nygh to her in dwellynge
By callyge to her / in the name of Jhesu
Had theyr petycyon / by her synguler vertu.

Some other that were / fully possessed

With wycked ſpyrytes / verynge the mynde
Or with ſekenes incurable / myſerably greued
By her dayly prayer / aboue courſe of kynde
Of theyr dyſeaſes / they ſhulde remedy fynde
And from her departe / in ſoule with gladneſſe
Whiche to her came / ſory in peyne and wretchednes.

¶ How ſaynt Werburge gaue knowledge to her ſyſters of her departure & how ſhe ordered ī vertue her ſayd monaſteryes afore her dethe. Ca.xxvii.

THis bleſſed abbeſſe / and vertuous floure
The well of clennes / and humylyte
Called to mynde / the wordes of our ſauyour
Reherſed by Mathewe / in his euangely
The vyctory all crowne / of eterne glory
Is gyuen to them / that be redy eche houre
Wyſely attendynge / whan they be ſende fore.

This texte was euer / in her memoryall
Prompte alway redy / as a true ſpouſes
To wayte on her ſpouſe / whan he wyll call
Her lampe replete / with oyle of mekenes
Synguler gyftes / ſhe had of chryſtes goodnes
Inſpyred with the ſpyryte / of prophecy
Secrete thynges to come / knowynge therby.

She knewe the ſeaſon / was haſtely comynge
Of her departure / fro this lyfe mortall
Wherfore ſhe ordred / ſadly euery thynge
Within her monaſteryes / and charges ſpyrytuall
Vyſytynge her couent / with her preſence perſonall

Gaue knowlege to them / that ſoone and haſtely
She ſhulde departe / frome this lyfe tranſytory.

Afore her were called / the ſyſters of yche place
And were apoynted / who ſhulde ſuccede
After to be gouernour / ruler / and abbeſſe
To the pleaſure of god / and theyr ghoſtly mede
Specyally commendynge / vertue as we rede
What meryte they ſhall haue / of god almyghty
In ſpyrytuall cures / that done well theyr duty.

All other offycers / within eche monaſtery
Were aſſygned by Werburge / theyr preſydent
And vnder obedyence / charged full depely
Theyr offyce to execute / vertue to augment
For the ſynguler profyte / of all the couent
She gaue to yche place / landes and poſſeſſyon
Suffycyently to ſerue / all the congregacyon.

Whan ſhe had ordeyned / eche place in charyte
Dyſchargynge her conſcyence / chargynge them all
To obſerue relygyon / with perfyte humylyte
After her exemple / and doctryne pryncypall
She had perfyte knowlege / by grace ſupernaturall
Her body ſhulde reſt / in the place of Hamburgens
After her departure / by deuyne prouydens.

Wherfore ſhe commaunded / the couent of Hambury
Wyſely to attende / with all theyr dylygence
Upon the ende / of her lyfe tranſytory
Whereſoeuer it be / to come with benyuolence
And incontynent take / her body with reuerence

And brynge it shortly / vnto theyr monastery
There to be tumylate / after her desydery.

As it pleaseth our lorde / and celestyall sufferayne
To sende to his seruaunte / his vysytacyon
The day was apoynted / the houre incertayne
Of her departure / frome worldly veracyon
The messanger of dethe / the ende of trybulacyon
Oppressed this lady / moost worthy fame
Ryght at her monastery / nompnat Trentame.

She thanked her maker / sayenge day and nyght
Well come be the vysytacyon / of god almyghty
She called her systers / present afore her syght
Her entente rehersynge / to them tenderly
Desyrynge all them / to folowe dylygently
The lawes of god / with honour and reuerence
And to her counseyll / to gyue fully credence.

Sayenge dere byloued systers / in our sauyour
O spyrytuall chyldren / my derlynges moost dere
Whiche haue refused / all worldly honour
To serue our lorde / with herte and mynde clere
Suffer no synne / in your soule to apere
But wasshe it away / by bytter contrycyon
With prayer penaunce / and true confessyon.

And trust ye well your true obedyence
your chast lyuynge / and wylfull pouerte
your dayly prayers / vygyls / and abstynence
That ye haue obserued / her vnder me
Shalbe recompensed / a thousande folde trule

Whan ye shalbe taken / fro this lyfe transytory
your rewarde shalbe / with immortall glory.

As for my dethe / whiche approches nere
I drede nothynge / tho nature ferefull be
I knowe for certayne / who departeth well here
Is newe borne agayne / to Joye and felycyte
Iche chrysten man hath / a thefolde natyuyte
Fyrst of his parentes / by cours of nature
Borne to many troubles / and sorowes sure.

By the seconde byrthe / whiche is more excellent
At fonte of baptym / we haue regeneracyon
By fayth professed / to god omnypotent
And made the chyldren / of ghostly saluacyon
To auoyde by grace / all wycked temptacyon
To be inherytours / of Joy perpetuall
Folowynge the counseyll / of holy chyrche withall.

The thyrde byrthe / moost ferefull and to be dredde
Is whan the soule / departeth fro the body
To payne or blysse / and leues the corps dedde
To tourne agayne to erthe / to wast and putryfy
In this thyrde byrthe / by callynge aferre for mercy
Our soule shall lyue in blysse / euerlastynge
Crowned with victory / for our chast lyuynge.

The swete byrde closed / in a cage a longe season
Gladly entendeth / to fly at lyberte
The prysoner fetered / and cast in depe dongeon
Euer supposes / to be rydde frome captyuyte
The soule of mankynde / moost dygne of dutye

Naturally delyzeth / pzoued by reaſon
To be delyuered / frome bodyly pryſon.

¶ Of ye ghoſtli exoztacyon ſaynt Werburge made to her ſyſters in her ſekeneſſe / and how deuoutely ſhe receyued ye ſacramētes of holy chyrche byfoze her deth. Ca.xxviii.

The day knowen / to her by reuelacyon
Of her departure / by ſygnes euydent
She ſende foz all / the hole congregacyon
And in preſence / of all her holy couent
She called foz the bleſſed ſacrament
To whome ſhe ſayd / with wozdes expreſſe
With weppynge teeres / and great mekeneſſe.

Well come my lozde / well come my kynge
Well come my ſufferayne / and ſauyour
Well come my confoze / and ioy euerlaſtynge
My truſt / my treaſure / my helpe and ſocour
Well come my maker / and my redemptour
The ſone of god / mooſt in maieſte
Withouten begynnynge / and endeles ſhalbe.

I byleue that thou / foz all mankynde
Frome heuen deſcended / of thy charyte
And was incarnate / ſcrypture dothe mynde
In the byrgynall wombe / of bleſſed marye
And ſuffered dethe / to make vs all fre
Deſcended to hell / roote the thyrde day
Aſcended to heuen / and our raunſon dyd pay.

And I knowlege to the / with pure entent

On Shoꝛpthurſday / after thy paſſyon
Thy mooſt bleſſed body / in ſacrament
Thou gaue to vs / foꝛ our communyon
To be our defence / and ghoſtly tuycyon
Now preſent here / in forme of breed
To Judge mankynde / bothe quycke and deed.

O ſufferayne ſauyour / replete with grace
I the beſeche / haue pyte vpon me
And in my ſoule / make a dwellynge place
Expulce all vyce / ſynne and myſery
Defende my ſoule / frome our aduerſary
Saue and pꝛotecte me / from peynes infernall
And bꝛynge thꝛugh thy mercy / to ioye perpetuall

Thus with reuerence / and great humylyte
She receyued / the bleſſed ſacrament
The ſeconde perſone / in trynyte
In perfyte fayth / hope / and loue feruent
With great contrycyon / as it was apparent
Her herte lyfte vp / towarde heuen on hye
Abydynge the wyll / of god almyghty.

She exoꝛted / her ſyſters euerychone
That were there preſent / in companye
Deſyꝛynge them all / with ſupplycacyon
To remembꝛe her / ſayenge with humylyte
My ſyſters in god / now knowe may ye
My dayes ben ferre paſt / comynge is the houre
Wherfoꝛe I betake you / fyꝛſt to our ſauyour.

Pꝛayenge you tenderly / foꝛ the loue of me
Werburge. k.i.

In deuyne ſeruyce / loke ye contynu
Obſeruynge pacyence / mekenes / and chaſtyte
Encreſynge in relygyon / by the grace of Jheſu
Who ſo perceuers / in herte and mynde true
Under obedyence / to the extreme day
Js ſure to be ſaued / ſcrypture ſo doth ſay.

Alſo remembre / that all worldly royalte
Honour / ryches / pleaſure / poſſeſſyon
Jf ye conſyder / are but a vanyte
Nothynge aſſured / to truſt therupon
Wherfore dyſpoſe you / to vertue alon
Whyle ye endure / in this lyfe mortall
Tyll that ye come / to Joy perpetuall.

Secondly ſhe ſayd / ſyſters J you pray
Kept well the order / of perfyte charyte
Neuer declynynge / fro it by no way
As ye haue taken / exemple of me
Jche loue other / and worſhyp in theyr degre
So that no murmure / nor dyſſymulacyon
Be founde amonge / this holy congregacyon.

Be euer lowly / humble / and obedyent
With due reuerence / worſhyp and honoure
Folowe the mynde / of your preſydent
Unto your heed / and ghoſtly gouernoure
Kepe well chaſtyte / that precyous floure
So that no thought / of ſenſualyte
Corrupte your mynde / to breke bygynyte.

Se that ye vſe / diſcrete temperaunce

Abſtenynge frome vayne ſuperfluyte
Se that amonge you / be founde no varyaunce
Kepe well the degrees / of humylyte
Theſe and many other / exemples of charyte
She taught her couent / of ſynguler deuocyon
How they ſhulde optayne / to hye perfeccyon.

Thyrdly ſhe prayed / ſayenge with mynde dylygent
O bleſſed ſauyour / I deſyre the
Saue and defende / my hole couent
And theyr monaſteryes / of thy great pyte
Frome peryll of peryſhynge / and frome enmyte
That all the ſubiectes / of our congregacyon
May well obſerue / theyr holy profeſſyon.

And graunt me ſwete lorde / throwe thy goodnes
Who ſo in thy name / vpon me dothe call
In langour / myſery / in peyne / or ſekenes
Alſo women with chylde / in peynes thrall
May haue remedy / and helpe ſpecyall
And people in pryſon / halte / blynde / and lame
By me may magnyfy / thy gloryous name.

Than ſhe requyred / with humylyte
The ſpyrytuall ſufferage / of holy vnccyon
Her ſoule to confort / frome all aduerſyte
She toke her leue / and kyſſed them ycheon
Alas what herte / myght ſhewe the lamentacyon
The weppynge / waylynge / and wofull heuynes
At the departure / of theyr ſwete mayſtres.

¶ Of the departure of ſaynt Werburge vnto heuē at the Werburge. k.ii.

abbay of Trentam / fro this myſerable lyfe / & what lamentacyon her ſyſters made for her dethe. Ca.xxix.

In all her infyrmyte / peyne and buſyneſſe
She vſed prayer / and medytacyon
Callynge for mercy / by interyor mekeneſſe
With weppynge eyes / and great lamentacyon
Remembrynge in herte / our lordes paſſyon
Commendynge her couent / vnto our ſauyour
To be theyr defence / ayde / and protectour.

The peynes encreaſed / of her infyrmyte
The panges doubled / her peyne to augment
Nature decayed / vnto ſuch debylyte
That the ſygnes of dethe / appered euydent
The houre approched / after all Judgment
Wherfore all thynges / were redy preparate
As was conuenyent / for ſo noble a ſtate.

Her ſpouſe Jheſus / hauynge pyte and cure
Upon his ſpouſes / in extreme dyſtreſſe
Wolde not ſuffer her peyne / longer endure
But ſende his angels / with great lyghtneſſe
To conforte his ſeruaunt / in peyne and ſekeneſſe
To dyſſolue her wo / and great penalte
And brynge vp her ſoule / to eterne felycyte.

There derknes was tourned / all vnto lyght
Langour and trouble / vnto proſperyte
The day was gouernour / ouer the nyght
Whan that ſhe paſſed / this lyfe tranſytory
Bondage and thraldome / were brought to lyberte
The tyme of Joye / and euerlaſtynge pleaſure

Was approchynge to Werburge / euer to endure.

A multytude of angelles / shynynge moost clere
Were redy to gyde / with humble reuerence
The soule of werburge / as truly dyd apere
And brought it to blys / vnto the hye presence
Of almyghty god / moost of magnyfycence
Clerely releashed / frome peynes of purgatory
To be rewarded / with euerlastynge glory.

This blessed virgyn / glorious and pure
In stedfast fayth / hope / loue / and charyte
The thyrde day of February / ye may be sure
Expyred frome this lyfe / caduce and transytory
To eterne blysse / coronate with victory
Thaungynge her lyfe / myserable and thrall
For infynyte ioye / and glory eternall.

With moche honour / these spyrytuall mynysters
Conueyed the soule / aboue the fyrmament
Passynge the seuen planettes / and all the sterres
Unto the presence / of god omnypotent
Syngynge full swetely / theyr songes equyualent
Of pleasaunt armony / of confort and blys
Salutynge her mekely / with wordes reuerent
Veni dilecta : veni coronabiris.

The thre Jerarcheses / were redy present
With heuenly melody / to receyue this monyall
The quere of virgyns / mette her incontynent
With great solempnyte / and processyon royall
Presentynge her soule / with myrthes angelycall
To Jhesu her spouse / to whome he sayd truly

Well come dere doughter / to blyſſe celeſtyall
Intra in gaudium : domui tui.

In meane tyme and ſpace / this venerable body
(The ſoule departed) lay whyte / ſtreyght and colde
Semynge as on ſlepe / ſhe had ben verely
With ſwete odours fragrant / paſſynge manyfolde
All ſpyces and herbes / in erth may be tolde
The place was ſo pleaſaunt / full of delyce
Lyke as it had ben / an erthly paradyce.

This forſayd venerable congregacyon
With wepynge teeres / and ſyghes lamentable
Waſſhed the ſwete body / after the olde cuſtome
And dreſſed the corps / with clothes honorable
Prepared all neceſſaryes / pleaſaunt and commendable
To churche ſhe was brought / ſolemply in ſyght
With feruent deuocyon / to be watched all nyght.

And as they watched / with due mynyſtracyon
Ouer the ſayd corps / deuoutly prayenge
They made great mournynge / and lamentacyon
Euerychone to other / for her departynge
Alas they all ſayd / with wofull waylynge
Our ſolace / our helthe / is clere gone away
Alas for ſorowe / what ſhall we now ſay.

The ſterre of our confort / is extyncte clere
The lanturne of our lyght / is taken vs fro
The floure of chaſtyte / is layd vpon a bere
The myrrour of mekenes / now lyeth full loo
The treaſure of relygyon / from us now is ago
Our ſorowe encreſed / wretchednes / and miſery

Syth thou arte departed / alas what remedy :

Our hertes ben plonged / in great wo and peyne
Our myndes are medled / with heuy langour
How shulde we now rest / frome morynge certayne
Beholdynge now deed / whylom our protectour
Swete lady thou art gone / frome vs for euermore
Our deedly sorowe / replete with bytternes
For waylynge and weppynge / can neuer ceas.

With herte mynde and voyce / to the we do call
O blessed Werburge / our moost dere maystres
O sufferayne lady / and ruler of vs all
Why hast thou vs lefte / in suche heuynesse
If thy wyll had ben / it is knowen expresse
Thou myght haue taryed / with vs by petycyon
Alas remedyless / is our lamentacyon

Frome vs thou arte taken / and gone is our solace
The myrrour of vertue / is deed now with the
The tryed stock of truth / and the grounde of grace
Is pyteously decayed / our hope and sufferaynte
O blessed sauyour / vpon vs haue pyte
Sende vs our confort / by thy great myght agayne
As thou hast reysed many / from dethe to lyfe certayne.

O dredefull dethe / cruell enemy to nature
With dolefull heuynes / on the we may complayne
Takynge our heed frome vs / to our great dysconfyture
Hath brought vs to thraldome / wofulnes and peyne
Nother kynge ne emperour / thy fauour may optayne
But he must departe / arested with thy launce.

Thanke we god of all / for it is his pleasaunce.

¶ How the hamburgenses toke the blessed body of Werburge frome Trentam by myracle & brought it to Hambury / & of ye buryall of werburge / & of manyfolde myracles shewed for her merytes .ix. yere after her trãslacyon. Ca.xxx.

This glorious vyrgyn / and moost blessed abbace
Departed from this lyfe / caduce and transytory
(As afore is sayd) the yere and tyme of grace
Almoost seuen hundreth / the thyrde day of February
To celestyall blysse / and inkynyte glory
Her subiectes oppressed / with wylfull pensyuenesse
With great trybulacyon / care and heuynesse.

But where werburge gaue / in commaundyment
To bury her corps / at place of Hambury
As was the wyll / of our lorde omnypotent
Her subiectes of Trentam / whiche had her body
Purposed her wyll / and entent to deny
Prepared to kepe / the corps by stronge hande
With them to remayne / as ye shall vnderstande.

The sayd people of Trentam / watched full dylygent
Her corps fulfyllynge / the obsequyes funerall
Entendynge to auoyde / and frustrate her testament
Gate a great company / by power Marcyall
Closed fast theyr doores / and gates one and all
Made sure yche place / by theyr prouydens
For to kepe the corps / excludynge Thamburgens.

But as Salomon sayth / sentencyously

There may be no counseyll / power ne prudence
Wysedome of man / nor naturall polycy
To derogate or chaunge / deuyne sentence
Proued euer day / by true experyence
Tho mankynde prepose / his mynde to fulfyll
yet god dysposeth / all thynge at his wyll.

And as they watched / the same sayd nyght
Moost busyly / to execute they wyll and entent
By deuyne prouydence / passynge mannes myght
Sodeynly on slepe / was all that couent
Theyr company and mynysters / that were there lent
Haupnge no power / for to waken doubtles
God so prouyded / for theyr great maystres.

Than shortly resembled / vnto that sayd place
The people of Hamburgens / a great company
With the mynysters of god / people full of grace
And anone by the wyll / of our lorde almyghty
The lockes and the barres / of that sayd monastery
Fell downe to the grounde / by power supernall
Without mannes hande / that enter they myght all.

Whiche myracle proued / the people of Hambury
Entred Trentam abbay / with mynde reuerent
And founde there on slepe / all the other company
Man / woman / and chylde / all that were present
They kneled all downe / and worshypped the sacrament
Prayenge our maker / of theyr good spede
Theyr specyall socour / euer at theyr nede.

Her blessed body / from Trentam they dyd take

Gladly departynge / out of the monastery
Nother man nor woman / had power to wake
Tyll they were passed / all greuous Jeopardy
Magnyfyenge our lorde / of his grace deuoutly
Solemply syngyng their songes celestiall
With infinite gladnes / and comfort spirituall.

After all this done / this holy congregacion
With reuerence / honour / and solempnite
With wepynge tearis / for pure affection
With lamentable songes / masse and dirige
Buried the corps / of this blessed ladie
Right in the chauncell / of the sayd abbay
There bodily to rest / as her wyll was alway.

All obsequies ended / therto belongynge
As was agreable for suche a prelident
The systers departed / with clamour and mournynge
Plonged in heuynes / and to their celles went
To wepe and wayle secretly / their hartis to content
Cryynge alas alas / nowe buried haue we
The exemple of vertu / mekenes / and chastite.

And as the history of her lyfe / doth expresse
In a boke nominat / the thyrd Passionary
After the buriall of this patronesse
The place was decorat / with myracles many
Manifest to the people / of euery progeny
Howe god almyghty of his speciall grace
Hath done for his seruant / in short tyme and space.

For many people greued with infirmite

Dolorous of hert / and interiour tribulacion
Heuynes of mynde / or other penalite
To her graue resortyng / with feruent deuocion
Sekynge for remedy / with great contricion
Anon by her prayer / vnto our sauyour
They were released from peyne and langour.

Also by her merite suffrage and peticion
Euery humble creature had helpe and succour
To distract persons / was yelded reason
wikked spirites expulsed . were that same hour
Impotent and feble to helth the dyd restour
Halt and lame had passage / the blynde had pfect syght
The dombe had speche / the deffe herynge ryght.

Women with childe / beynge in great ieopardy
Namely in trauelyng / greued with wo and payne
Whan they myght nat come / sendyng to her oratorye
Makynge true oblacion / restaured were certayne
To helth and prosperite / from wo delyuered playne
And if they obteyned a relique from the place
The mother and childe / by it founde speciall grace.

The deuout pilgrym / the perfit maryner
The true laborer / the marchant with richesse
The carefull pore man / the peynfull prisoner
Were sondry tymes delyuered from wo and distresse
Men / women / childr / sekynge with mekenes
This glorious virgyn / with humble supplicacion
Founde soone remedie / helpe and consolacion.

¶ A litle breue reherssall of her lyfe / and howe for her Werburge. l.ii.

myracles shewed ye couent of Hambury purposed to trā
slate her body / by the helpe of Mercyens. Ca.xxxi.

THis gloryous lady / and gemme of holynesse
Of fyue myghty kynges / descended lynyally
A pynces / an enherytryce / replete with mekenes
Refused all pleasures / pompe / and vayne glory
Entred relygyon / professed at Ely
A spectacle of vertue / dwellynge in that place
And a floure of chastyte / electe by synguler grace.

Her honorable vncle / kynge Ethelrede
Consyderynge her vertue / and hye deuocyon
Made her gouernour / for ghostly helthe and mede
Ouer all the monasteryes / within his regyon
For the sure encresement / of perfyte relygyon
Foure of these monasteryes / we haue in memory
As Wedon / Trentam / Repton / and Hambury.

Whan she was ruler / and chefe pzelydent
Of these sayd places / vnder god almyghty
Than vertue and goodnes / dayly dyd augment
By heuenly grace / to the soule helthe of many
And by her exemple / and doctryne ghostly
Kynges / lordes / barons / refusynge theyr royalte
Entred relygyon / with great humylyte.

Her lyfe and doctryne / agreed bothe in one
Proued in effecte / by specyall gyftes of grace
Many she conuerted / vnto contemplacyon
To prayer and penaunce / whyle they had here space
Her couent and subiectes / within euery place
By her excellent vertue / and hye dyscrecyon

Were gratiously gouerned / for theyr saluacion.

Her dwellynge was moste at the place of Wedon
Where many myracles were shewed openly
And at Trentam abbay / of her foundacion
From peyne she departed to eternall glory
After her entent was buried at Hambury
Of whom it may be sayd / here lyeth nowe present
A princesse / a virgin / a nonne / and a president.

The deuout couent of her congregacion
Whiche hath long wayled / with sorowfull payne
Nowe haue great cause to make consolacion
And gyue due honour to our lorde and sufferayne
Knowynge that Werburge / in blysse is nowe certayne
For them all dayly a true mediatrice
In the heuynly trone / afore the hie Justice.

Our sauiour Jesus / graunter of all goodnes
Consyderyng the mekenes / and pure virginite
Of Werburge his spouse / and proued holynes
By speciall grace / preserued her body
To his laude and honour / his name to magnifye
Both hole and sounde / from naturall resolucion
As her soule was clere from vice and corruption.

This immaculat mayde / shenyng more bryght
Than radiant phebus in the triumphant trone
With the quere of virgins / prayseth day and nyght
The blessed trinite with due adoracion
Of perpetuall pleasure hauyng the fruycion
A singular intercessour for her seruauntes all
Werburge. I.iii.

That here in erth mekely to her wyll call

And though her body do reſt nowe in graue
yet notable ſignes contynually be done
Some warned in their ſlepe comfort to haue
By viſityng her place / callynge her vpon
With contrite hert makyng true oblacion.
Whiche thynge contynued by ſpace of .ix. yere
With meruailous myracles euydent and clere

The couent conſyderyng ſuche great company
From diuers partes / reſortynge to theyr place
In pylgrimage to Werburge / for helpe and remedy
Entended to tranſlate this glorious abbaſſe
To exalte her body replet with great grace
To her great honour / comfort to eche creature
Pite that ſuche a relique ſhulde lye in ſepulture

To the prayes and honour of god omnipotent
And of ſaint Werburge laude and reuerence
The couent and the people by one aſſent
Deſired Coelrede than kynge of merciens
For aide in this caſe / helpe and diligence
(Whiche thynge graunted) the day appointed was
The clergy and the comons reioiſed with ſolace

¶ Of the ſolempne tranſlacion of this glorious virgyn ſaint Werburge / and of the great myracles done at the ſayd ſeaſon by the myght of god and merite of this gracious lady. Cap. xxxii.

At the day appoynted of her tranſlacion

Kynge Coelred and his counsell were redy present
With bysshops and the clergy men of deuocion
Her systers and subiettes a religious couent
The comon people from eche place thider went
With great gladnes / the hole for pleasure gostly
The seke and impotent for helth and remedy

The bysshops and clergy stode vpon one parte
Of her holy graue / and her systers echone
Syngynge and praysynge the blessed trinite
The kyng and his counsell with great deuocion
Stode on the other parte in contemplacion
The graue was opened eleuat was the chest
Wherin her holy corps. ix. yere fully dyd rest

Whan this sayd monument discouered was
Suche a suauite and fragrant odoure
Ascended from the corps by singular grace
Passyng all worldly swetnes and sauour
That all there present that day and hour
Supposed they had ben / in the felicite
Of erthely paradise / without ambiguite.

And as eche man thaught by naturall reason
Nothynge shulde remayn of that blessed body
But the bare boones / all els to resolucion
The couerture remoued by the sayd clergy
The corps hole and sounde was funde verely
Apperyng to them / on slepe as she had ben
Nothyng depaired / that ther coude be seen.

Her vesture appered hole clere and white

No parte conſumed / for all the longe ſpace
Fragrant in odoure / repleit with delite
As at the fyrſt ſeaſon whan ſhe buried was
But whan diſcouered was her ſwete face
Beautye appered more white than the lile
Myxt with roſe colour / mooſt faire for to ſe

Her louely countenannce / ſo comly to beholde
And her ſwete fiſnomy / with fairenes decorat
As freſſhely apparant / mooſt pleaſant to be tolde
As at the fyrſt day / whan ſhe was tumulat
No doubt therof / for ſhe with ſynne nat maculat
Vlyng all her lyfe in clennes and virginite
From bodily corruption / by grace muſt ſaued be.

The clergy yet ſerchyng more diligently
Her precious body / and interiour veſture
Eleuat the corps full reuerently
With moche worchip honour and cure
Founde nothynge periſſhed in ſhap nor figure
For all the long ſpace tyme and contynuaunce
She lay in ſepulture by diuine ordynaunce.

Whiche famous myracle / notified ſo clere
The clergy with her ſyſters in ioy and honour
The kyng and his counſell all therat preſent were
With voice melodious made a great clamour
Prayſyng and magnifiyng our bleſſed ſauiour
With celeſtiall ſonges / and hymnes full of blys
Deuoutly reherſyng / with all their deuour
Mirabilis deus in ſanctis ſuis.

With that the comon rude people euerychone
In the ſayd churche yarde ſtandyng without
Heryng the clergy ſyng with ſuche deuocion
Towarde heuen they cried / and buſely dyd ſhout
The ſpace of .iii. houres / or nere there about
Worſhippyng our lorde / with voice ſhrill and loude
In hert wyll and mynde / as well as they coude.

After all this done / her bleſſed body
Was waſſhed and reclothed with veſture precious
By the ſayd couent of the place of Hambury
The byſſhops were reueſſhed in pontificalibus
And all the clergy ſyngyng with voice melodious
Kneled all downe and gaue due reuerence
Honour and worſhip to her corporall preſence.

Thus they reſceyued with perfit humilite
This ſacrat relique hole and ſubſtanciall
And layd it in a ſhryne with great ſolempnite
Enowrned with riches ſumptuous and roiall
Prepared by the kyng / and ordeyned inſpeciall
Entendyng that this relique and goſtly treaſure
Perpetually with them ſhulde remayne and endure

People oppreſſed with greuous infirmite
Diſtract perſons / halt blynde and lame
Reſortynge to her ſhryne with humilite
Shortly were cured by callynge of her name
Impotent creatures (the legende ſayth the ſame)
Touchyng her tumbe / were cured from payne
Whiche tumbe remayneth at Hambury certayne

After the was translate / knowen it is well
The clergy to procession / went after to mas
Honoryng and praysyng / the kyng of Israell
And blessed Werburge / with moche solace
Whan diuine seruice duely ended was
The bisshops gaue theyr holy benedictions
The people departed glad to their mansions

This holy sayd fest of her translacion
Was ordeyned and celebrate with solemnite
As sayeth Ranulphus in his policronicon
About the yere of grace .vii. hundreth and .viii. sothle
The .xi. Kalendas of the moneth Julii
Regnyng in mercelande the said kyng Coelrede
Than bysshop of Lichefelde was Hedda / as we rede

¶ Howe the body of saynt Werburge contynued hole / and substanciall at Hambury after the trāslacion by the space of two hundreth yeres / tyll the danes were comon to this lande / or it felle and was resolued vnto powder The .xxiii. Chapitre.

This rutilant gemme and specious floure
Hole and substanciall remayned at Hambury
Two hundreth yeres in beaute and colour
By singular grace / and angelicall custodye
Tyll the danes were comon of malice and misery
Of ire and myschief / as we vnderstande
We meane the comyng of pagans to this lande

Whiche danes by sufferaunce and dispensacion

Of almyghty god / for synne and iniquite
Punysshed vnpiteously all this region
with a wofull plage of great crudelite
The sharpe swerde of deth / hauynge no pite
Spared no creature / prest nor religious
Long tyme duryng in their malice odious

Than this vitall glebe by diuine ordinaunce
Voluntary permytted naturall resolution
Lest the cruell gentils / and wiked myscreauntes
With pollute handes full of corrupcion
Shulde touche her body / by indignation
Whiche pagans were enemyes to our lorde Jesu
Rebels to holy churche vnfeithfull and vntrue

Howe be it the power of our swete sauyour
Myght haue continued the body of his syruant
All that longe season in worshyp and honour
As he preserued of his grace abundaunt
Many sayntes of this realme hole fresshe and vernant
viii. hundreth yeres agon / to this present day
And like so to endure / hole and clere alway.

Sothely to considre / our lorde omnipotent
Glorious in his sayntes / scripture doth specifie
Of his diuine prouidence / pleasure and intent
Some haue resolued / for the greatter glorie
Of their resurrection for the tyme truly
Some other to continue without corruption
To the true example of his promission

Many holy martyrs / for Christ haue byn slayne

The hie prestis of god murdred cruelly
Some with wylde bestes deuoured in certayne
Some cast in fiers on cooles to broyle and fry
Upon many other bydes fedyng openly
Of whom the prophet clerely doth reherce
The more peyne here and wo / the more glory doubtles.

The glorious martyr Stephan (as is red)
In this present lyfe dyd myracles many
Neuertherles / he raised no people that were deed
But after the resoluynge of his blessed body
He raised deed men to lyfe agayne truely
That the great power of lyfe myght spryngе
From iniurie of deth / by our heuen kynge.

Great was the respect of diuyne grace
In the body of Werburge / without resolucion
Shewed by her myracles / for mannes helth and solace
But greatt was the hope of the eterne reuouacion
In her body resolued to naturall consumption
Whiche for her merites to this present day
Helpeth all her seruauntes that to her wyll praye

Therfore worshyp we with singular deuocion
The holy lyuynge of this virgin gratious
For why / all the halowynge of her conuersacion
Belongeth to the honour of our lorde Jesus
Whiche of his grace hath made her so glorious
And graunteth his mercy / and of synne remyssion
To all them / for whom / she maketh intercession.

Blessed pure virgin / moines and abbasse

O venerable werburge / mekely we the pray
Make thou supplycacyon / to the graunter of grace
After this lyfe present / that all we may
Come to heuen blysse / whiche lasteth for ay
There to beholde / the glorious trynyte
To whom be laude / worshyp / honour / & endles glorye.

¶ The table of the seconde boke of ye glo-
ryous vyrgyn saynt Werburge.

If the comynge to this lande of paganes / and of the trouble of this lande / and how ye kynge of Mercyens for drede departed out of this lande / and how longe saynt Werburge contynued incorrupte and hole at the abbay of Hambury. Ca.i.

¶ How the people of Hambury brought the shryne to Chester / and of the solempne receyuynge of it / by all the inhabytauntes of the countre. Ca.ii.

¶ A lytell descrypcyon of the fundacyon of Chester / and of ye abbay churche within the sayd cytee / where the holy shryne remayneth. Ca.iii.

¶ A breue reherssall / of the fyrst fundacyon of the mynster of Cherster / & of the institucyon of seculer chanons / in the tyme of kynge Edwarde senyor. Ca.iiii.

¶ Of the notable myracle of saynt Werburge in ye tyme of chanons / and fyrst how she saued Chester from the destruccyon of Walshe men. Ca.v.

¶ Howe saynte Werburge cured and healed a woman thre tymes whiche was halt and lame to helthe and prosperite agayne. Cap.vi.

¶ Howe saynt Werburge saued and defended Chester from innumerable barbarik nacions purposynge to de stroye and spoyle the same cite vtterly. Cap.vii.

¶ Howe saynt Werburge by her merite sent fruyte to a barayne Woman by synguler prayer made vnto her. Cap.viii.

¶ Howe a woman with childe by peyne brought out of her mynde & reason by saynt Werburge was restaured to prosperite and helthe agayne. Cap.ix.

¶ Of a nother woman vnlaufully wurkyng was made blynde and sore punysshed/and by saint Werburge was restored to syght agayne. Cap.x.

¶ Howe saint Werburge restored to helth & prosperite vi. lame & halt persons by singular grace. Ca.xi.

¶ Of a yonge man vnryghtfully hanged was thries de lyuered from deth by saynt Werburge to helth and prosperite. Cap.xii.

¶ Howe at the maner of Aptō saynt Werburge refrayned wilde horses from distruction of her cornes. ca.xiii.

¶ Of a chanō of Chester hauyng his leg brokē was restored to helth by saint Werburge his prones. Ca.xiiii.

¶ A breue reherſall or cronicle of certayne kyngis/and howe kyng Edgar came to Cheſter/alſo howe erle Leofrice repared diuers churches. Ca.xv.

¶ Of the comyng of Willyam cõquerour to this lande/ & how Lupe was fonder of Cheſter monaſtery. ca.xvi.

¶ Howe ſaint Werburge taught her monke to kepe pacience for the greatter merite and glori to come. ca.xvii.

¶ Howe landes roſe vp within the ſalt ſee ayenſt Hilburghde by ſaint Werburge at the petition of William conſtable of Cheſtre. Ca.xviii.

¶ Howe Matildr / counteſſe of Cheſtre coũſellynge her huſband agaynſt the monaſterie was drowned at Bartlowe with many other mo. Cap.xix.

¶ Howe a great fire like to deſtroye all Cheſtre by myracle ceaſſed whan the holy ſhryne was borne about the towne by the monkes. Ca.xx.

¶ A breue reherſall of the myracles of ſaynt Werburge after her tranſlacion to Cheſtre. Ca.xxi.

¶ A charitable mociõ / coũſel / & deſire to al thinhabitãtz wĩn the coũtie palatin of Cheſt for ye monaſtori. ca.xxii.

¶ A litle oriſon or prayer to ye bleſſed virgin ſaint Werburge by the tranſlatour of this warke. Ca.xxiii.

¶ A ſhort concluſion of this litle werke to the reders by the tranſlatour. Ca.xxiiii.

¶ The prologe of the translatour of this lytell treatyse in the seconde boke.

NOw whan we consyder / with mynde dylygent
The merueylous maners / & synguler condycion
Of the comyn people / symple and neclygent
Whiche without lytterature / and good informacyon
Ben lyke to Brute beestes / as in comparyson
Rude / wylde / and boystous / by a prouerbe certan
Good maners and conynge / maken a man.

Saynt Paule sayth / shewynge to the Romans
How all thynge wryten / in holy scrypture
Is wryten for our doctryne / and ghostly ordynans
For our great confort / and endeles pleasure
All thynge is knowen playnly / by lytterature
Moral vertues / be noted by it full playne
Frome vyce and neclygence / to abstayne certayne.

What were mankynde / without lytterature
Full lytell worthy / blynded by ignoraunce
The way to heuen / it declareth ryght sure
Thrugh perfyte lyuynge / and good perseueraunce
By it we may be taught / for to do penaunce
Whan we transgresse / our lordes commaundyment
It is a swete cordyall / for mannes entent.

How shulde the seuen / scyences lyberall
Haue ben preserued / vnto this day
The wysdome / of the philosophers all
But alone by lernynge / it is no nay
The notable actes / of our fathers I say

(yf litterature were nat) myght nat nowe be tolde
Nor auncient hiſtories and cronycles olde

The lawe of ciuile / and of holy canon
By ſtudy be preferred with moche honour
To execute iuſtice / and for due reformacion
The moſt bleſſed doctrine of our ſauiour
The actis of the apoſtoles / with the doctours four
Be preſerued by wrytyng / and put in memorie
With the lyues of ſaintes many a noble ſtorie

Of whiche hiſtories we purpoſe ſpeciall
To ſpeke of ſaint Werburge / vnder your protection
Delaryng the ende of her lyfe hiſtoriall
As we haue begon / and made playne mencion
In the fyrſt volume by breue compilacion
There playnly deſcriuyng her liniall diſcens
Of .iiii. myghty kyngdomes by true experience

Alſo we haue ſhewed in the ſayd littel boke
Her goodly maners / and vertuous diſpoſicion
Of her yonge age / who ſo lyſt theron to loke
And howe her bretherne ſuffred martyrdome
Of her fathers realme a litell diſcripcion
Howe ſhe was profeſſed in the place of Ely
Of her conuerſacion within the ſayd monaſtery

After for her vertue / howe ſhe was made abbaſſe
Of diuers monaſteries flouryng in vertue
And of the great miracles whiche there done was
For her great charite / by the grace of Jeſu
Howe diuers of her kynrede dyd clerely exchewe
Werburge. m.i.

All worldly pleasures and honours transitory
Professynge obedience at the place of Ely

Also we haue shewed vnder your licence
Of her departure from this lyfe mortall
And of her sepulture at the place of Hamburgence
The manyfolde myracles shewed by grace supernall
The wofull lamentacion of her systers all
And howe after .ix. yere of her translacion
By diuine ordinaunce miracles were done

We humble require you of your charite
To this seconde abstract to graunt pardon
Considerynge we omytte whilom the historie
And speke of cronicles / makyng a digression
It is of no ignoraunce / nor presumption
But to enlarge the mater and sentence
To gladde the auditours / and moue their diligence

In our seconde boke expresse nowe wyll we
Under your licence and speciall tuicion
Of this blessed virgin / flourynge in chastite
Why and wherfore she came to Chestre towne
Principally by miracle / and diuine prouision
And howe for synne / vice / and wykednes
Danes oppressed this lande with wretchednes

And howe she was receyued at Chestre citie
Of the fyrst foundacion of towne and the place
Of the great myracles there shewed openlie
To chanons and monkes / by singular grace
Unto euery creature in extreme case

Howe Werburge delyuered the towne from enmite
From dredfull fire / and plages of miserye

Also encronicled foloweth here expresse
A breue compilacion of kynge Edwarde seniour
Of kyng Ethelstam / the great worthynes
Of humble kyng Ergar[e] regnyng as emperour
Of his comyng to Chestre / of his great honour
And howe Erle Leofrice repared of his charite
The mynstre of Werburge gyuyng therto liberte

Of the seconde foundacion of the sayd monastery
From secular chanons to monkes religious
Soone after the conquest sayth the hystorye
By the erle of Chestre nominat Hug. Lupus
With counsell and helpe of blessed Anselmus
And of the great compas of the sayd abbay
Enuired with walles myghty to assay

Howe Ric[o] erle of Chestre by myracle ryght
Was preserued from daunger of Walshemen
And howe he was drowned about mydnyght
Purposyng to distroye the monastery certen
Celestiall signes were shewed to men and women
To childzen and innocentes by singular grace
Of blessed Werburge patronesse of the place

These miracles specified / and many other mo
This virgin shewed within Chestre cite
Whiche at this tyme we let ouer go
Lest to the reders tedious it shulde be
Almyghty god both one two and thze
Werburge. m.ii.

Sende vs theyr grace to make a good ende
Helpe lady Werburge this warke to amende

¶ Of the comynge of cruell pagans to this lande / and howe saint Werburge longe lyenge hole and incorrupt at Hambury. than was resolued to pouder. And howe the kynge of merciens was chased from his lāde. Ca.i.

Afore the comyng of danes to this lande
Merueilous signes were shewed in syght
To conuert the people (as we vndestande)
Sterres in the heuen shynyng full bryght
Dyuersly mouynge apperyng day and nyght
Rennynge in the ayre dredfull to beholde
By longe continuaunce sayth the story olde

Flamyng fire / dragons in the ayre fleynge
Thondryng / and layth / erth quake moost terrible
With many other signes / as cometis blasynge
Were seen in the ayre / to nature horrible
Upon clothynge of people bloddy dropes odible
Euydently appered: the yere of grace
vii. hundreth. lxxvi in many a place

By whiche sayd signes wonderfull to se
Two plages of pestilence folowed incontinent
The first was great derthes hungre and pouerte
The seconde was the greuous and sore punysshement
Of the cruell danes cursed and fraudulent
Whiche trouble began the .iiii. yere of Bricticus
Kyng of west saxon / saith maister Alfridus.

The thyrde yere folowyng these signes in certen
Danes and Norwaies enterpriled this lande
In the north partie . an hoost of armed men
Whiche cruelly spoiled and distroied holy Ilande
With Tynmouth abbay / and all that myght be fonde
Drowned and slewe the people euerychone
Brenned churches / townes / spared no religion

In short tyme after the prenominate pagans
At tamysmouth reentred this realme agayne
Destroyed many cites by their myghty ordynaunce
Oppressed London / Canturbury by power certayne
The kynge of Merciens to escape was fayne
Kyng Adoulfus made the danes a batell
To whiche kyng by grace the victorye befell

yf ye wyll consydre the cause wherfore and why
Our lorde suffred pagans to punysshe this region
The treuth was this : for synne specially
For in the primatiue churche / with great perfection
Kynges / quienes / dukes entred religion
Professed obedient chaste without propurte
Uertue to encrease / true loue and charite

That tyme was iustice ministred with mercy
True loue and amite founde in euery place
Dissimulacion / pride and fals enuye
Durst nat appere in halle nor in palace
Extorcion pollynge opteyned no grace
The commaundementes of god were obserued a ryght
Charite was feruent / encreasynge day and nyght

Werburge. m.iii.

By proces of tyme / as sayth myn auctour
Through great possession / power / and liberte
Vertue decreased in holy churche day and hour
Holy religion decayed pitiousle
Charite was colde / iustice and equite
Extorcion disceyte were vsed euery day
Couetise / pride / lechery were ryued alway

Therfore our lorde of his great ryghtwisnes
Suffred cruell people to entre this region
A scourge to correct synne and wykednes
Like a swarme of bees from dyuers nacion
Whiche had no pite mercy nor compassion
Danes Gotes Norwayes and scottes also
Pictes and the wandeles with mony other mo

These forsayd fearfull and cruell nacions
Moost cruell pagans dyd great persecucion
From the begynnyng of Adelwlf, kyng of westsaxons /
Tyll the comynge of normans vnto this region
The space enduryng by full computacion
Two hundreth yeres complet .xxx. also
With the swerde of vengeaunce fire and moche mo

The yere of our lorde .D.CCC. fyfty and one
At Tamysmouth arriued a great hoost of pagans
With .iii. hundreth ships and .l. men of armes echone
Whiche destroied Douer / and put the land, to greuans
Agayne Bernulphus the kyng of Mercians
The paynyms preuayled / and caused his hoost to fle
Whiche fortune enforced them more bolder to be.

But the yere of grace .M.CCC. lxx and lxxtie
The greatteſt noumbre of the pagans all
viii. kynges entred this realme by victorie
Norwaies / gootes / Wandels / danes in eſpeciall
With many other nacions within in generall
Kyng Hingwar and Hubba than came to this lande
Whiche ſlewe ſaint Edmunde kyng of Eſtenglande

The cruell paynyms and tyrauntes mooſt furious
Repleit with malice / pryde / and enuye
Seruauntes to ſatan and miniſtres malicious
Purpoſed to deſolate holy churche wyckedly
Brenned monaſteries and ſpoiled vtterly
Many churches chapels of a mortall hate
Slewe religious men and nonnes dyd violate

The people were punyſſhed in euery place
To olde ſicke and impotent they ſhewed no mercy
yonge ſoukyng children coude fynde no grace
Wyddowes and wyues were put to vilany
Maydens were corrupt / and ſlayne chamfully
So all this realme endured confuſion
Put to greuous peyne / deth / and affliction

After theſe infidels had ben at London
And there accompliſhyed theyr cruell entent
They ſoone proceded towarde Lincolñ region
From thens directly with haſty iugement
To the realme of Merciens noble and auncient
Right vnto Repton where the kynge lay
Robbyng and ſpoilynge all in theyr way

This kynge of Mercelande called Burdredus
Regnyng .xxii. yere vpon the merciens
Was clerely expulsed by the pagans furious
And went vnto rome with pure conscience
Where he is buried by diuine prouidence
Whiche kyng was colyn by discent liniall
To blessed Werburge so glorious and pudicall

This gracious virgin and preelect abbasse
Buried at Hambury (as is sayd before)
Continued incorrupt and hole in that place
In vesture and body .ii. hundreth yere and more
But whan the danes came With suche rigour
To Repton abbay / than she was resolued
And of deuocion full richely shryned

¶ Howe the people of Hambury brought the shryne to Chestre / and of the solemne receyuynge of it by all the inhabitauntes of Chesshyre. Cap.ii.

IN meane tyme the danes pitously destroyed
The monasteries of Werburge / Trentā & Wedō
As they many other places had euyll oppressed
In the north and east part of this region
The kyngdome of Kent suffred lyke punicion
The Ile of Wyght endured moche turment
So dyd the Westmarches / for punysshement

The people of Hambury Wysely consyderyng
The comynge of danes vnto Repton
And of the departure of Burdred theyr kyng
Howe all Englande was in great affliction

And howe they were next to endure punicion
Whiche forsayd Repton was distaunt from Hambury
The space of .b. mile sayth the history

The Hamburgens With all the comons and clergy
Dredynge full sore the pagans flagellacions
Of their lyues desperate / but for the shryne specially
To our blessed sauiour made dayly inuocacions
With vigils prayers and feruent meditacions
To preserue the countrey / the relique / the shryne
From daunger of enmite and miserable ruyne

As they continued in cotidian prayer
The best remedie seking for to fynde
To auoide veracion and all greuous daunger
Of theyr great ennemies cursed and vnkynde
The holy goost inspired theyr mynde
To take the shryne with great humilite
And bryng it to Chestre from perill and enmyte

They toke this riall relique of reuerence
With great mekenes deuocion and feruour
Through the grace of god theyr helpe and defence
Came towarde Chester with diligence and honour
A place preordinat by our sauiour
Where her body shulde rest and worshipped be
Magnified with miracles next our ladie

¶ Whan the clergie of Chestre and the citezens
Herde tell of the comynge of this noble abbasse
They made preparacion and great diligence
In theyr best maner worship and solace

To mete this relique of ſingular grace
The great eſtates / and rulers of the countray
Were redy to honour ſaint Werburge that day

Firſt was ordeyned a ſolemne proceſſion
With croſſes / and baners / and ſurges clere lyght
The belles were tolled for ioye and deuocion
The miniſtres of god in coopes redy dight
With cenſours of ſiluer / to encenſe her body right
All preſtis and clerkes redy to ſay and ſynge
Proceded in ordre / this holy virgin praiſyng

Next to the clergie approched in degree
The lordes of the ſhyre knyghtes barons all
With feruent deuocion / praiſyng the trinite
Whiche ſent to them ſuche comfort ſpirituall
The citezens enſued with gladnes cordiall
With bokes and beades / magnifieng our maker
For this great treasure to kepe them from daunger

Venerable virgins next ſette in ordre clere
With lilies in theyr handes / coronate with chaſtite
Good widowes and wyues appoynted well were
Gyuynge true thankes vnto this virgin fre
Nex them aſſemble all the commonte
In all goodly maner dyuiſed by diſcrecion
Praiſynge ſaynt Werburge with humiliacion

Whan they approched to her hie preſence
And comon were afore this relique moſt riall
They kneled all downe with mycle reuerence
Salutynge the ſhryne with honour victoriall

Magnifyng With melodye and tunys musicall
This glorious virgin / nothyng done amis
Syngynge Te deum to the kyng of blysse

The lordes / the citezins / and all the commons
Mekely submytted themselfe to the shryne
With manyfolde prayses and humble supplicacions
With interiour loue / and moyall discipline
Trustyng all in her to saue them from ruyne
From greuous daunger / and cruell enmite
By her entercession vnto the trinite

They gaue due thankes vnto this abbasse
Deuoutly sayenge knelyng vpon kne
Welcome swete lady replet with grace
The floure of mekenes / and of chastite
The cristall of clennes and virginite
Welcome thou art to vs euerychone
A speciall comfort for vs to trust vpon

Welcome swete princesse / kynges doughter dere
Welcome faire creature / and rose of merciens
The diamonde of dignite / and gēme of shenyng clere
Virgin and moiniall of mycle excellence
Welcome holy abbasse of hie preeminence
The rutilant saphire of syncerite
Welcome swete patronesse to Chestre cite

Thou art our refuge / and singular succour
Our sure tuicion next to the trinite
Our speciall defence at euery hour
To releue thy seruauntes in all necessite

Thou art our ſolace and helpe in eche degre
Our ioye / truſt / and comfort / and goodly treaſure
Welcome to this towne for euer to endure

¶ Agaynſt her comynge into Cheſtre cite
The ſtretes were ſtrawed with flours fragrant
The mancions and halles edified rialle
Were hanged with arras precious and pleaſaunt
Torches were caried on eche ſyde flagrant
Alſo ouer the ſhryne was prepared a canaby
Of cloth of golde and tiſſewe riche and coſtly

Thus with great worſhip decour and dignite
Of all the clergie lordis and citezens
She was receyued with great humilite
Into the cite with humble reuerence
The clergie ſyngyng with mycle diligence
The comons prayeng with loue feruent
Folowynge this relique after their entent

In proceſſion they paſſed all in to the towne
With ioye and great gladnes ye may beſure
In ordre togyther in charite and deuocion
Praiſyng our ſauiour and this virgin pure
They brought full ſolemple with goodly peaſure
This riall relique to the mooſt noble place
Within all the cite as our lordes wyll was

This ſeconde tranſlacion of this virgin bright
From Hambury abbay vnto Cheſtre cite
Was celebrate with ioye and gladnes full right
The yere of our ſaueour in his humanite

viii. hundreth complet .v. and seuentie
Alured regned than kyng of this region
Victorious and liberall / coronate at London

This kyng deuyded in .iiii. partes his richesse
One parte to the poore the seconde to religion
One thyrde part to scholers / the fourth to bild churches
And of a day naturall / he made triū diuision
viii. houres to rede and praye with feruent deuocion
viii. houres occupied with busynesse naturall
And other .viii. houres to rule his realme riall

henric° .li°.v.

Nobilitas innata tibi probitas honorem
Armipotens Alurede dedit / probitasqz laborem :
Perpetuumqz labor nomen : cui mixta dolori
Gaudia semper erant : spes semper mixta timori.
Si modo victus erat / ad crastina bella parabat
Si modo victor erat / ad crastina bella pauebat
Jam post transactos regni viteqz labores /
Christe ei sit vera quies / sceptrumqz perenne.

¶ A litel descripcion of the foundacion of Chestre / and of the abbay churche within the sayd cite / where y^e holy thyne by grace remayneth. Cap.iii.

Two cites of legions in cronicles we fynde
One in south Wales / in the tyme of Claudius
Called Caerusk / by britons had in mynde
Orels Caerleon / buylded by kyng Belinus
Where somtyme was a legion of knyghtes chiualrous
This cite of legions was whilom the bysshops se
Unto all south wales / nominat Wenedocie
Werburge. n.iii.

Another cite of legions we may fynde also
In the weſt part of Englande / by the water of Dee
Called Caerlleon of bꝛitons longe ago
After named Cheſtre by great auctoꝛite
Julius the emperour ſende to this ſayd cite
A legion of knyghtes foꝛ to ſubdue Irelande
Like wyſe dyd Claudius (as we vnderſtande)

The founder of Cheſtre / as ſayth Policronicon
Was Lleon Gauer / a myghty ſtronge gyaunt
Whiche buylded caues and dongions many one
No goodly buyldyng / pꝛoꝛe ne pleaſaunt
But the kynge Leil a briton ſure and valiaunt
Was founder of Cheſtre by pleaſaunt buyldyng
And of Caerleil alſo / named by the kynge

Ranulphus in his cronicle yet doth expꝛeſſe
The cite of Cheſtre edified foꝛ to be
By the noble romans pꝛudence and richeſſe
Whan a legion of knyghtes was ſende to the cite
Rather than by the wyſdome of Bꝛitons oꝛ policie
Obiectyng clere agaynſt the bꝛitons fundacion
Whiche auctour reſteth in his owne opinion.
A°. gratie. lxv.
Kyng Marius a bꝛyton regnyng in pꝛoſperite
In the Weſt partie of this noble region
Ampliat and walled ſtrongly Cheſtre cite
And myghtyly foꝛtified the ſayd foundacion
Thus eche auctour holdeth a ſingular opinion
This Marius ſlewe Reodꝛic kyng of pictis lande
Callyng the place of his name Weſtmarilande

This cite of legions so called by the Romans
Nowe is nominat in latine of his proprete
Cestria quasi castria / of honour and pleasance
Proued by the buyldynge of olde antiquite
In cellers and lowe voultes / and halles of realte
Lyke a comly castell / myghty stronge and sure
Eche house like a toure somtyme of great pleasure

Unto the sayd Chestre all north wales subiect were
For reformacion Justice and iugement
Theyr bysshops see also it was many a yere
Enduryng the gouernaunce of brutes auncient
To sarons and britons a place indifferent
The inhabitauntes of it mankull and liberall
Constant sad and vertuous / and gentyll continuall

Of frutes and cornes there is great habundaunce
Woddes / parkes / forestes / and beestis of venare
Pastures / feeldes / comons / the cite to auaunce
Waters / pooles / pondes / of fysshe great plente
Most swete holsome ayre by the water of dee
There is great marchandise / shyps / and wynes strang
With all thyng of pleasure the citezens amonge

The yere of our lorde a hundreth sixe and fyfty
Reigned vpon this lande a briton kyng Lucius
Whiche with great desire required instantly
His realme to be baptized of pope Elentherius
Whose charitable mocion was harde full gratius
The pope enioyed / graunted his peticion
And sende .ii. doctours to conuerte this region

The doctours by prechyng and ſingular grace
In ſhort tyme conuerted the greatter Britayne
The people confeſſed their ſynne and treſpaſe
Baptized all were / forgyuenes dyd attayne
Idolatrie ceſſed through out this lande certayne
With grace circumfulced and lyghtned was England,
By faith to god profeſſed was all Wales and ſcotlande

Kynge Lucius ordeyned / by the doctours mocion
xviii. biſſhops in this realme for to be
And .iii. archebiſſhops for goſtly exhortacion
To reduce the people to vertue and humilite
At London was ſet the chief archebiſſhops ſe
The ſeconde in ſouth Wales at cite of legions
The thyrde was at yorke all ſubiect to the britons

Churches were edified in many a place
Here in the more Britayne with diligent labour
Chriſtis faith encreaſed by ſpeciall grace
Faithfull religion delated euery hour
Diuine ſeruice was ſongon & ſayd with great honour
True faith and deuocion were dayly encreaſynge
Namely in Cheſtre by grace continuall abidynge.

Certaynly fyth baptym came to Cheſtre cite
Soone after Lucius and afore kynge Arthure
By the grace of god and their humilite
The faith of holy churche dyd euer there endure
Without recidiuacion and infection / ſure
Wherfore it is worthy a ſingular commendacion
Aboue all the citees and townes of this region

The perfect begynnyng and fyrſt foundacion
Of the monaſterie within the ſayd cite
Was at the ſame tyme by famus opinion
That baptym began within this countre
The great lordes of Cheſtre of landes and auncetre
Firſt edified the churche for comfort ſpirituall
In honour of the apoſtels Peter and Paule

Whiche churche was principall to all the citie
And the mouther churche called withouten doubt
It was their buriall by great auctorite
To all this ſayd cite / and .vii. myle without
The cemiterie was large to compaſe it about
But what by ſufferaunce and proceſſe of tyme
Many olde cuſtomes ben brought now to ruyne

In whiche mother churche of Peter and Paule
All holy ſacramentes miniſtred dayly were
With great encreaſement of vertues all
Continuall endurynge more than .CCC. yere
In the britons tyme / of blodde noble and clere
Afore the comyng of ſaxons to this lande
Whiche with apoſtaſie enfected all Englande

So after that the Angles / Jutes / and ſaxons
By fortune of batell / power and policie
Had clerely ſubdued all the olde britons
And them expulſed to wales and wylde countre
The faith of holy churche remayned at cheſtre cite
In the ſayd churche truely by ſingular grace alone
Like as the faith of Peter neuer fayled at Rome

What tyme ſaint Auſtin the doctour of Englande
Had baptized Ethelbrut kynge of Kent
And by relacion dyd fully vnderſtande
That the faith of Chriſt moſt digne and excellent
In the citie of legions was truely remanent
In the churche of the apoſtoles Peter and Paule
He magnified our lorde with thanke ſpeciall

That ſeaſon there was a noble monaſterie
xii. myles from Cheſtre nominate Bangour
Where religious monkes lyued vertuouſlye
Almoſt .iii. thouſande / obedient euery hour
Without poſſeſſions / lyuyng by theyr labour
Unto whiche place he ſende for helpe at nede
To conuert the ſaxons (ſayth venerable Bede)

Saynt Auſtin approched the cite of legions
Where the ſayd couent afore hym were preſent
Whom he required to preche to the ſaxons
The faith of holy churche and baptym diligent
To whoſe humble prayer / they were diſobedient
Obſeruyng no charite / yet for theyr great pride
Many of them were ſlayne by kyng Ethelfride

That ſeaſon the britons remayned vnder licence
Of Angles and ſaxons within the ſayd cite
Tyll the dayes of Offa kynge of merciens
Regnyng in the weſt marche with great victorie
Whiche kynge expulſed by power and chiualrie
All brutes and walſhemen clere out of his londe
In peyne of punyſſhement none there to be fonde

Whan the ſaid churche haunge great liberte
Dayly augmented in vertue and holynes
Preſtis and clerkes prayſed the holy trinite
And the ſayd apoſtoles with great mekenes
The cite encreaſed in worſhyp and ryches
Churches were edified with feruent deuocion
In ſondrie places within the ſayd towne

This noble kyng Offa agaynſt the pagans
Of .xvii. batels has euer the victorye
Confederate was with great Charles kyng of Fraũce/
And edified ſaint Albans monaſterye
Of Englande firſt toke the hole monarchie
Gaue Peter pens vnto the court of Rome
Tranſlate to Lichefeld, the ſe of Canturbury
xxxix. yere regned fully in this region.

¶ A breke reherſall of the firſt foũdacion of the mynſtre of Cheſtre/and of the inſtitucion of ſecular chanons in the tyme of kyng Edwardeſenior. Cap.iiii.

The yere of grace .D.CCC. ſeuynte and fyue
Kyng Alured regned vnpon this region
The relique the ſhryne full memoratyue
Was brought to Cheſtre for our conſolacion
Reuerently receyued ſet with deuocion
In the mouther churche of ſaint Peter and Paule
(As afore is ſayd) a place mooſt principall.

In whiche holy place vnto this preſent day
She bodily reſteth by diuine prouidence
And ſo by his grace ſhall continue alway
In honour worſhyp/and mycle reuerence

A deuout oratorie of vertue and excellence
Prepared by our lorde / where ſpeciall remedy
Is agayne all greuans in ſoule and in body

The primatyue gyftes gyuen to the place
Immediatly were after her comynge
Of deuout people replet with grace
In the dayes of the forſayd Alured kyng
Of landes and libertes they made moche offerynge
To god and ſaint Werburge / after theyr poſſeſſion
Triſtyng to her prayer and ſure protection

The people with deuocion and mynde feruent
Gaue diuers enoymentes vnto this place
Some gaue a coope / and ſome a veſtement
Some other a chalice / and ſome a corporace
Many albes and other clothes offred ther was
Some croſſes of golde / ſome bokes / ſome belles
The poore folke gaue ſurges / torches / and towelles

The citezens offered to the ſayd virgine
For the great miracles amonge them wrought
Many riall gyftes of Jewels to the ſhrine
Thankynge our lorde that hath vs all bought
And bleſſed Werburge in worde dede and thought
Women and children ſhe mynded full gracious
As teſtifieth the archebiſſhop Antoninus

Diuine ſeruice was obſerued deuoutly
Euery day encreaſyng with feruent adoracion
As the feeſt required / and the ſolemnite
To the honour of our lorde and hie glorificacion

Preistis and clerkes with pure meditacion
Obseruynge their dutie gaue vertuous example
Of great perfection to the comon people

¶ After kyng Alured / regned his son
Edward / senior by liniall discence
Crowned the yere of grace .ix. hundreth and one
with worldly glorie and great preeminence
Buylded castels townes of myghty defence
Subdued the danes .vii. tymes in batell
Encreased his realme manfully and well.

That tyme the realme of merciens was translate
By the kynge / and gyuen to duke Ethelrede
A noble man of auncetre / politicke and fortunate
Whiche maried his syster lady Elflede
Doughter to the forsaid valiant kynge Alurede
The sayd gentilman was wyse and vertuous
Sad and discrete pacient and famous

This lady Elflede duchesse of merciens
Had speciall loue and singular affection
To blessed Werburge and true confidence
Wherfore she mynded with great dilectacion
To edifie a mynstre a place of deuocion
To this holy virgin for profite of her soule
Enlargynge the churche of Peter and of Paule

She moued her husbande with great mekenes
To supplie the same dede of his charite
And diuers other nobles of their goodnes
For aide in that cause after their degree

Joyfull was the duke of the mocion goſtle
Glad were the nobles within all the ſhire
To founde a mynſtre after her deſire

Afore the holy roode in a table writen is
At ſaint Johans churche without the ſayd cite
Howe that prince Edmund the thyrde ſon ewis
Of Edwarde ſenior true foundour ſhulde be
To whom lady Elſiede was aunt by auncetre
So betwix twayne was founded in ſhort ſpace
An holy mynſtre of vertue full and grace

They ſende for maſons vpon euery ſyde
Counnynge in geometrie / the foundacion to take
For a large mynſtre longe hie and wyde
Subſtancially wrought / the beſt that they can make
To the honour of god / for ſaynt Werburge ſake
At the eſt ende taken theyr ſure foundacion
Of the apoſtoles churche / ioynynge both as one

Whan it was edified / and curiouſly wrought
And all thyng ended / in goodly proporcion
Than riche enoymentes were offred and brought
Of the ſaid nobles with great deuocion
Temporall landes / rentes / poſſeſſion
Were gyuen for euer to mayntayne the place
Of bleſſed Werburge by ſingular grace

Spirituall miniſtres were elect alſo
Secular chanons of great humilite
To ſynge and pſalmodiſe our ſauiour vnto
Within the ſayd mynſtre haunge a perpetuite

Prebendes were aſſigned to that fraternite
With townes / borowes / and fredomes manifeſt
Continually encreaſyng vnto the conqueſt

And the olde churche of Peter and of Paule
By a generall coũſell of the ſpiritualte
With helpe of the duke mooſt principall
Was tranſlate to the myddes of the ſayd cite
Where a pareſſhe churche was edified truele
In honour of the aforeſayd apoſtoles twayne
Whiche ſhall for euer by grace diuine remayne

Alſo we may note holdyng none opinion
This lady Elfiede of her charite
Of the ſayd mother churche tranſlate the patron
Cauſed the ſayd oratorie reconciled to be
In the honour of the moſt bleſſed trinite
And of ſaynt Oſwalde martyr and kyng
For the loue ſhe had to hym continuynge

The yere of our lorde .ix. hundreth and .viii.
This noble ducheſſe with mycle royalte
Reedified Cheſtre / and fortified it full ryght
Churche / houſe / and wall decayed piteouſſe
Thus brought vnto ruyne was Cheſtre cite
Firſt by Ethelfride kyng of Northumberlande
And by danes / norwaies veryng all Englande

Alſo ſhe enlarged this ſayd olde cite
With newe myghty walles ſtronge all about
Almoſt by proporcion double in quantite
To the forther byldynge brought without dout

She compaſſed in the caſtell enemies to hold out
Within the ſayd Walles to defendꝛ the towne
Agaynſt danes and walſhemē to dꝛyue them all downe

After the deth of her huſband Ethelrede
She ruled the realme of mercelande manfully
Buylded churches/and townes repared in dede
As Staforꝛd/Warwike/Thomwoꝛt/and Shiriſbury
Of newe ſhe edified Runcoꝛn and Ediſbury
The body of ſaynt Oſwaldꝛ alſo ſhe tranſlate
From Bardeney to Gloucetur there to be tumulate

Where ſhe edified a noble monaſtery
With licence of her bꝛother afoꝛe nominate
In honour of ſaint Peter/ouer the bleſſed body
Of the ſayd ſaint Oſwaldꝛ/kyng and martyꝛ coꝛonate
In wiche monaſtery this lady was tumulate
The yere of our loꝛde .ix. hundꝛeth and nyntene
Whom myn auctour pꝛayſeth in this woꝛdes ſerene
Henricꝰ .li. b.

O Elfleda potens/o terꝛoꝛ virgo viꝛoꝛum:
Victrix nature nomine digna viri.
Te quoqꝫ ſplendidioꝛ fecit natura puellam
Te pꝛobitas fecit nomen habere viri.
Te mutare docet ſed ſolum nomina ſexus
Tu regina potens/rexqꝫ trophea parans
Jam nec ceſarei tantꝫ meruere triumphi
Caeſare ſplendidioꝛ virgo virago. Vale.

¶ Of the notable myracles of ſaynt Werburge ſhewed in the tyme of chanons/and fyꝛſt howe ſhe ſaued Cheſt from diſtruction of walſhemen Cap. b.

This glorious Werburge and virgin pure
By singular grace of god omnipotent
Shewed many myracles to euery creature
To blynde / dombe / halt / lame / and impotent
In the cite of Chestre / whan her shryne was present
Like wyse as in her lyfe at Wedon / at Hambury
Witneseth the same her true legende and history

Where to the honour / prayse / and laudacion
Of Jesu / the seconde persone in trinite
And of this virgin a speciall commendacion
We purpose to reherse nowe with charite
Under the protection of you that shall the reders be
Parte of the myracles / with mynde diligent
In this humble stile / and sentence consequent

The first myracle / that our blessed sauiour
Shewed for his spouses / after her translacion
To Chestre: was nye the tyme of Edwarde seniour
Son to kyng Alured famous of renowne
The Name of britons was chaunged that season
Were named walshemen in the montaynes segregate
Euer to the saxons hauynge inwarde hate

The Walshemen that tyme had ouer them a kyng
Called Griffinus / to be theyr gouernour
Electe by the comons their appetite folowyng
Endurate with malice / couetise and rancour
Ennemies to englisshemen / as is said before
This kyng entended by mortall enuy
The cite of Chestre to spoyle and distrye
Werburge. o.i.

A myghty hoſt diſcended from the mountans
Well armed and ſtrongely approchyng the cite
Prepared for batell with them great ordinaunce
The ſayd Griffinus and all his company
With his power paſſed ouer the water of Dee
Whiche ryuer adioynneth to the ſayd towne
Betwene Englande and Wales a ſure diuiſion

This kynge layd ſiege vnto Cheſtre cite
With all his great hoſt / there honour to wyn
By policie of warre / encrealynge myghtyle
For whiche the citezens remaynyng within
were ſore diſconſolate like for to twyn
With wofull heuy hartes they dyd call and crye
Upon bleſſed Werburge for helpe and remedye

The charitable chanons with great deuocion
Toke the holy ſhryne of theyr patrones
Set it on the towne walles for helpe and tuicion
Truſtynge on her to be ſaued from diſtres
But one of the ennemyes with great wyckednes
Smot the ſayd ſhryne in caſtyng of a ſtone
And it empaired / piteous to loke vpon

Anone great punyſſhement vpon them all lyght
The kyng and his hoſt were ſmytten with blyndnes
That of the cite / they had no manner of ſyght
And he that ſmote the holy ſhryne doubtles
Was greuouſly vexed with a ſpyte of darkenes
And with hidous payne expired miſerably
The kynge was ſore adred / and all his company

Shortly the kynge remoued his great host
Departed from the cite without any praye
And gaue in commaundement in euery coost
Saynt Werburge landes to meynteyne alway
Alligned her possessions euer after that day
With the signe of the crosse a token euident
In pleasyng this virgin / for drede of punyshement.

¶. Howe saynt Werburge cured and healed a woman thre tymes (whiche was halte and lame) to helth and prosperite agayne. Cap. vi.

In the cite of Chestre (the legende doth expresse)
An honest matrone dwelled / Eagida nominat
Whiche by continuaunce / and payne of sickenes
Was made halt and lame / of helth all desperate
yet to saynt Werburge her hart was eleuate
Instantly required with humble supplicacion
This holy virgin for helth / and preseruacion

Anone by the merite of this lady clere
The pacient restored to helth and prosperite
Gaue honour and thankes to Werburge and prayer
Entendyng euer after her true seruaunt to be
And truely continue lyuyng in pure chastite
But shortly she brake her promesse made inlyght
Folowyng her appetite and carnall lustes full ryght

She had great riches welth and prosperite
And maried with pleasure after her entencion
Where thries she endured her olde infirmite
And thries was cured by meke intercession
Werburge. o.ii.

To helth of body from peynfull contraction
Thus by the merite of this virgin pure
She was deliuered from peyne thies to pleasure

This forsayd Eadgide prudently ponderyng
These notable miracles with her goostly eye
Gaue great cõmendacion and speciall thankyng
To almyghty god / with feruent humilite
And to saynt Werburge knelynge on kne
Came to her oratorie and gaue an oblacion
To the holy shryne with singular deuocion

¶. Howe sayne Werburge saued Chestre from innumerable barbarike nacions / purposynge to distroye and spoyle the sayd cite vtterly Cap.vii.

ANother tyme inumerable barbarike nacions
Came to spoyle Chestre to robbe it and distry
(Sayth the historye) from diuers regions
Harolde kyng of danes / the kynge of gotes & galwedy
Maucolyn of Scotlande and all theyr company
With baners displayed well armed to fyght
Theyr tentes rially in hoole heth were pyght

They set theyr ordinaunce agaynst the towne
Upon euery side / timorous for to se
Namely at the northgate they were redy bowne
By myght police to haue entred the cite
The citezens dredyng to be in captiuite
Made intercession vnto this holy abbasse
For theyr deliueraunce in suche extreme case

The deuout chanons ſette the holy ſhryne
Agaynſt theyr enemies at the ſayd northgate
Truſtynge to Werburge to ſaue them from ruyne
And ſhewe ſome myracle to them diſconſolate
For the citezens were of their lyues deſperate
Paſſynge mannes mynde to eſcape theyr daunger
But all only by merite of this virgin clere

As the kynges were ſautynge this forſayd cite
Truſtyng for a praye to haue it euery hour
One of the ſayd ennemies replet with iniquite
Nat worſhyppyng ye virgin / nor dredyng our ſauiour
Smote this riall relique with a ſtone in his rancour
Brake therof a corner curiouſly wrought
Caſt all to the grounde: than ſorowe came vnſought

The ſayd maleſactour nat paſſynge the place
Vexed with the deuill for his greuous offence
Royng and yellyng his outragious treſpaſe
Tore his tonge a ſonder in wodely violence
Miſerable exſpired afore them in preſence
Satan ceaſed nat to ſhewe great punyſſhement
Upon his ſoule and body / by ſignes euident

Theſe kynges conſiderynge this ſoden vengeaunce
Amonge them all lyght ſo ſoone and haſtely
Shortly remoued theyr great ordinaunce
Departed from the cite with theyr company
Callyng on this virgin faſt for grace and mercy
Promyttynge neuer after to retourne agayne
To diſquiete her ſeruauntes and cite in certayne

¶. Howe ſaynt Werburge by her merite ſent frute to a barrayne woman by ſyngular prayer made vnto her The .viii. chapitre.

A Noble gentilman / a conſul in office
Deſcendyng of the hie and riall blodde of coſty
Elected a ſpouſes at his owne deuice
A ſwete faire gentilwoman curtes and comly
Nominat Judith / ioynned to hym in matrimony
With whom this lady lyued a longe ſeaſon
Barrayn and fruteles of generacion

She daily lamented her great wretchednes
As woman infortunate full of miſerye
Prayed to ſaynt Werburge with interiour mekenes
For remedy and helpe agaynſt that woful infamye
Deſired to haue iſſue and frute of her bodye
If it pleaſed god / and this virgin alſo
Moſt greateſt comfort to bynge her hert from wo

Saynt Werburge appered to her in viſion
In white bright veſture / clere as the criſtall
Expreſſynge wordes of great conſolacion
Moſt ioyfull to Judith to make reherſall
Commaundyng her by the effect ſpeciall
To go to her churche with ſingular deuocion
And praye our ſauiour with humble ſupplicacion

Alſo for to compaſſe her holy aulter
With a linen cloth / knelyng on her kne
And after for to take the ſame cloth in fer[ſ]
And compas her wombe about reuerentle

This Judith was ioyfull / and rose vp yerle
And truely fulfylled this goostly vision
From thens departed to her propre mancion

Soone after this wyfe afore reherſed
Conceyued a childe and had ſucceſſion
Prayſyng this virgin in hart worde and dede
And after the tyme of her purificacion
Of the ſame faire cloth ſhe made oblacion
Richely ſet in ſyluer / well wrought in compas
With many riche enormentes ſhe ſende to this place

After came herſelfe vnto the monaſtery
With many of her neyghbours / ther° nye dwellyng
Prayſyng and laudyng this glorious lady
With cordiall thankynges makyng theyr offeryng
Of this great myracles true witnes bearyng
Departed from the place with ioy and deuocion
All the ſayd company / eche to theyr mancion.

¶. Of a woman great with childe with peyne brought out of her wytte / by ſaynt Werburge was reſtoured to reaſon agayne. Cap. ix.

In the prouince of Cheſtre / knowen it is of olde
A certayne man dwelled / of great honeſte
Whiche had a doughter diſpoſed manyfolde
To ſondrye vertues / clennes / and humilite
This humble mayde ioyned was in matrimonye
To an honeſt yong man / of whom ſhe conceyued
And was great with childe / openly perceyued

Whan the tyme approched of her deliueraunce
Vexed she was with mycle wo and payne
Continually enduryng / with suche hidous greuaunce
That out of her mynde she went incertayne
All phisike and medicyns were founde to her in vayne
No comfort in erth helpe nor remedye
For her myght be founde in suche extremite

Her father and mother / and her frendes all
Brought theyr dere doughter with great deuocion
To saynt Werburge churche / requiryng speciall
This blessed virgin / with humble intercession
To helpe the pacient from all veracion
Promyttynge an oblacion to this lady bryght
Whan she vnto reason were comen a ryght

And as she slepped at the aulter ende
Wofully cruciat with peynes hiduous
Passyng mannes cure it for to amende
Anone by the merite of this virgin glorious
She was released from all payne greuous
And fully restored to her reason agayne
Had good deliueraunce / and spedde well in certayne

Whiche myracle knowen / her frendes euerychone
And all the good matrons of the sayd cite
Came holly togyther with theyr oblacion
To the holy shryne thankyng with hart fre
This blessed virgin of her benignite
Whiche is so redy a mediatrice alway
To helpe her true seruauntes both nyght and day

¶. Howe an other woman vnlaufully wurkynge was made blynde / and by ſaynt Werburge reſtored was to her ſyght agayne. Cap.x.

Within the ſame cite afore the abbay gate
Dwelled a woman / which brake the cōmaundement
Of god and holy churche / hye ſabbot day dyd violate
Unlaufully wurkynge: wherfore great punyſſhement
Fell vpon this woman with peynes equiualent
Sodaynly ſmytten / wurkynge full buſely
With greuous blyndnes / and mycle miſerye

This woman conſyderynge her ſyght was gone
The pleaſure of this worlde her helpe and ſuccour
Hauynge to lyue by / ſmall riches or none
Cried maynly out out alas euery hour
Wo is me wretche fulfylled with dolour
Alas I was borne to abyde this wofull day
My maker to diſpleaſe / alas what ſhall I ſay?

She called to memorie with hye diſcrecion
The myracles that Werburge ſhewed to mankynde
By grace ſhe repented / with ſuche contricion
That water diſtilled from her eyes blynde
Dolefully lamentynge / that ſhe was ſo vnkynde
Ruthfully was brought to Werburge oratory
Truſtyng in this virgin to haue remedy

As ſhe continued in her ſupplicacion
Wofully weppynge / abidyng the great grace
Of bleſſed Werburge / with ſingular inuocacion
Anone ſhe was cured to helth and ſolace
Werburge p.i.

Restored to her eyesight / she passed the place
Prayed our lorde and this virgin pure
Was a holy woman after ye may be sure.

¶. How saint Werburge restored to helth and prperite
vi. lame and halt prons by singular grace. Cap.xi.

The excellent fame of this glorious lady
Dilated was through all this region
Manifest by myracles full honorably
Therfore from diuers partes came many a person
For helty of body and gostly conuersacion
Some to be cured from payne intollerable
And some of oldesores that were incurable

Amonge whom there came vnto her place
Sixe wofull persones / cured for to be
Halt blynde and lame beseking her of grace
With humble supplicacion vpon them haue pite
With weppynge treares sayenge / o souerayn ladie
O imperiall princesse / and kynges doughter dere
Heele our disease by thy instant prayer

O blessed virgin and holy moiniall
O glorious abbasse / and worthy gouernour
O pereles parens and ministre spirituall
O celestiall gemme resplendent with honour
Praye for vs wretches vnto our sauiour
That we may opteyne here mercy and grace
Cured of our sekenes / after to se thy face

Thy name transcendeth this realme swete lady

Thy myracles magnifien thy great goodnes
Thy worshyp encreaseth with honour and glorie
Daily euermore through thy great holynes
Shewe nowe thy power / cure vs from sekenes
That by the we may prayse the kyng of blis
As thou hast cured manyone or this

By these meke prayers / in hert full penitent
And many other orisons sayd priuatly
Callyng on this virgin with deuocion feruent
For certayne / or they passed the monastery
They were all cured from peyne and malady
In wytnes wherof / and triall as it was
Theyr staues remayned longe after in the place

¶ Howe a yonge man thries hanged vnlaufully Was thries delyuered by saynt Werburge from dethe to lyfe and lyberte. Cap.xii.

Almyghty god gaue in commaundement
By moises lawe / to his people echone
No innocent to slee by wrongfull iudgement
Nor causeles to punysshe by greuous oppression
Also to beware of lyght suspection
Wherof a myracle we shall nowe expresse
Done in Chestre cite by Werburge theyr patronesse

A certayne yonge man dwelled in the cite
Honest in maners / and of good conuersacion
Disposed to vertue and humilite
Was arrest and taken of a lyght suspicion
By the officers and rules of the sayd towne
Werburge. p.ii.

Gyltles accuſed moſt innocently
Condemned and iudged to deth ſhamfully

After ſentence gyuen / miniſtres were all redy
Upon the iudgement to do execucion
He was fettred and brought to the gebbet by and by
And as a ſtronge theſe hanged therupon
His frendes and coſyns for hym made great mone
Alas what tongue myght expreſſe the wo
They made that tyme departynge hym fro

And as this innocent hang in his payne
He called to mynd the manyfolde goodnes
The myracles of Werburge ſhewed her certayne
Howe ſhe had ſaued many in great diſtres
So whan he myght no wordes expreſſe
In mynde he required her / and humblie dyd pray
From ſhamfull deth to ſaue hym that day

Whan all the officers departed were thens
Suppoſynge the ſoule ſeperate from the body
A white doue deſcended afore them in preſence
And lyght upon the gebbet immediatly
The bynde with his byll brake the rope truely
The priſoner eſcaped that tyme from deth
Shortly reuiuynge toke naturall breth

Whiche thynge notified ſo meruailous in ſyght
The miniſters returned / theyr labour in vayne
Toke this innocent by power and myght
Upon the ſayd gebbet hanged hym agayne
Thus he was delyuered by myracle from payne

The tortuous turmentours ceſſed their tyranny
Permytted the priſoner to go at liberte

Whiche myracle knowen / his frendes and colyns all
Returned agayne with glad mynde and chere
The priſoner mette them louyng god in ſpeciall
And bleſſed Werburge in his beſt manere
The deuout citezens approched them nere
Went all to the ſhryne the virgin thankyng
The belles were tolled for ioy of this thyng

¶ Howe at the maner place of Upton ſaint Werburge reſtrayned wylde horſes from diſtruction of cornes put in by theyr ennemyes. Cap.xiii.

Alſo the thyrde ſeaſon approched to Cheſtre cite
Many cruell ennemyes in the part of Wirall
Purpoſyng to ſpoyle / and diſtroy all the countre
The people and theyr frutes / theyr corne and catall
The citezens dredyng to be captyue and thrall
Fortified the cite with men of armes bright
Hauynge ſure artillarie for to defende and fight

The huſbandes of the countrey about there dwellyng
Agaynſt the ſayd ennemyes makyng ſore prouyſion
Brought their corne & cattell / their huſolde remaynynge
In aſſurance to be / to the parke of Upton
Saynt Werburge landes from all diſtruction
Whiche parke from Upton was diſtaunt a myle ſpace
A prebende to a chanon of her mynſtre and place

Theſe Wycked ennemies fulfylled with malice
Werburge. p.iii.

Agaynſt all conſcience and ordre of charite
In no maner wiſe dredynge the hie iuſtice
Entred the ſayd parke with mycle cruelte
Pulled downe the paale at pleaſure and liberte
Put in theyr horſes made great diſtruction
Of cornes and catell of a hie preſumpcion

Werburge remembrynge theyr great wyckednes
Theyr malice and myſchief agaynſt her poſſeſſion
By myracle ſhewed her power and goodnes
Preſeruynge her ſeruauntes from all veracion
And punyſſhyng her ennemies with great affliction
As ſhe hath done many ſeaſons or this
By mean to her ſpouſe our lorde kyng of blis

Whan the corne sheuys lay broken afore them playne
The horſes had no power any part to take
For why? by myracle / theyr heedes all in certayne
Were vpholdē in the ayre / theyr bodyes ſore dyd quake
They touched no frutes / waſt they dyd none make
Of the principall doers / ſome raged out of mynde
Some ſmetyn with palſy / ſome lepre halt and blynde

Whiche punyſſhement knowen vnto all the hoſt
The rulers and captens without any delaye
Knyt agayne the sheuys / that none ſhulde be loſt
With tremblynge hartes humbly began to praye
This holy virgin to ſaue them that daye
Upon a condicion / eſcapynge from payne
Endurynge theyr lyfe neuer to turne agayne

From that tyme furth ther dar^e no nacion

Conſyderyng the power of this virgin pure
Approchyng Cheſtre cite to make derogacion
Denmarke Goet nor Galway ſcot ye may be ſure
Cruell danes nor walſhemen dare nat procure
Wherfore the citezens haue cauſe to loue the place
And thanke this virgin for her helpe and grace

¶ Howe a chanon of Cheſtre hauyng his leg and thre
broken was reſtaured to helth by ſaynt Werburge hys
patroneſſe. Cap.xiiii.

Within Cheſtre mynſtre that holy place
Dwelled a chanon nominate Alminus
Sad of diſpoſicion by ſyngular grace
Humble and pacient / diſcrete and vertuous
Liberall and honeſt / gentyll and piteous
And for a paſtyme this was his pleaſure
To hunt and to hauke to conſort nature

And as this chanon rode for his ſolace
On huntyng with other honeſt company
By fortune vnfrendly / the more pite was
Both horſe and man fell to grounde ſodenly
In perill of theyr lyues ſtandynge in ieoperdye
The horſe downe lyenge oppreſſed the chanon
Brake his leg a ſondre / with blod great effuſion

Whan by his company the chanon was vp take
He fell in a ſwowne for anguiſſhe wo and payne
All worldly riches redy to forſake
For one hour of quietnes to be had agayne
Unto his mancion they brought him certayne
Werburge. p.iiii.

Where he continued in mycle wo and langour
Abydyng allonly the mercy of our sauiour

Coũnyng surgeans were sought vpon euery syde
To cure this gentylman from penalite
But none of them / by wysdome coude prouyde
Clerely to heele hym / and do hym remedye
Thus he remediles / in extreme ieopardye
Prayed to saynt Werburge his patronesse
For helth and remedye / of her great goodnesse

Whose humble prayer with inward loue feruent
Was graciously harde of her charite
For right soone after appered euident
A byrde like a doue most clere for to see
Into the chanons chambre the byrde flow trule
Among the company / and anone doubtles
The place was repleit with odour and swetnes

Soone after the company euerichone
Were sadly on slepe a thynge meruaylous
And afore the pacient by playne vision
Saynt Werburge appered in his syght full glorious
Sayeng: my chaplayne and seruaunt vertuous
Why be ye ablent from diuine seruice
Nat doynge your dutie accordyng to iustice

Ma dame he sayd / and swete president
It is well knowen to all the cite
Of my mysfortune and harmes euydent
Howe my horse almost had oppressed me
Wherfore an impotent I endure mysere

It is no feyned cause / that I do expresse
I beseke you of helpe nowe swete maistres

Saynt Werburge euer piteous and merciable
Upon her seruantes in great distresse
Conforted her chaplayne with wordes delectable
Proued in effect by her excellent goodnes
To his syght and helynge as he dyd expresse
She touched the foote / that sore and broken was
Cured it holly from payne by singular grace

Whan she had cured thus this impotent
Anone she departed out of his syght
The chanon gaue honour to god omnipotent
And to this virgin and lady bryght
Of this goostly vision comfort and lyght
All peyne was past sekenes veracion
Helth was come by playne probacion

The chanon rose vp the same mydnyght
And went to mattens as custome was
His bretherne were glad with all theyr myght
Praysed our lorde of his singular grace
And Werburge patrones of the sayd place
Also with honour reuerence and humilite
The bretherne sange te deum solemle

¶ A brefe reherfall of certayne kynges / and how kyng Edgar° came to Chestre. Also howe Leofrice Erle of Chestre repared diuers churches. Cap. xv.

After the decesse of kynge Edwarde seniour
Ethelstan his sonne was coronate at London

Kyng of this lande regnyng in honour
With power regalite by true ſucceſſion
Valeant in chiualry and actes euerychone
Subdued danes / ſcottes / noꝛwayes / bꝛitons all
Opteyned triumphe / and dignite imperiall

The fourth yere of his reigne / and the yere of grace
viii. hundꝛeth .ii. and ſeuenty by full computacion
Guy erle of Warwike by foꝛtune ſlayne hale
Colbꝛond the gyaunt / floure of danes nacion
The ſayd kyng Ethelſtan by power and renowne
Thꝛies ſubdued danes / and ſlewe the kyng of Irelāde
Nominat pꝛince Anlaff as we vnderſtande

This noble Ethelſtan was good and gracious
To all holy churche / namely to religion
Kyghtfull in iudgement / liberall and piteous
To his true ſubiectes thꝛough his dominion
To mynſtres and holy places had great affection
Confirmed theyꝛ foundacions with libertes clere
Whoſe noble actes be touched a lytell here

Regia progenies produxit nobile ſtemma.
Cum tenebris noſtris illuxit ſplendida gemma
Magnus Ethelſtanus patrie decus, orbita recti
Illuſtris probitas a vero nelcia flecti.

After Ethelſtan regned Edmunde his bꝛothur
Fyue yeres in honour / hauyng great victoꝛy
Pꝛincis Elred and Edwyn ſuccided eytherothur
In great buſines with ſcottes and danes truly
Next whom meke Edgar[us] / ſayth the hiſtoꝛy
xvi. yere of age / coꝛonate at Kyngſton
With peace and quietnes firſt ruled this region.

In whose natiuite the blessed Dunstan
Herde angels singe with mycle melody
Peace is now come to Englande certan
Quietnes / and rest / honour / and victory
Of cornes and frutes that tyme was plentie
Danes / norwaies / scottes / britons in euery place
Submytted them selfe to the kynges grace

Science encreased true loue and amite
Uertue was exalted in all this region
Monasteries were edified of his benignite
Endowed with riches / and riall possession
xl. religious places by famous opinion
Were newly buylded by the sayd noble kyng
In sondry places of this realme standyng

Secular prestes expulsed sothely were
From diuers monasteries with great discrecion
Religious persones repleit with vertue clere
Entred their places cause of deuocion
Charite was feruent and holy religion
The lyues of sayntes were soth in eche place
And written in legendes for our comfort and grace

Many shyps were made vpon the kynges cost
To serche by the se all his lande about
That no alian entre in no maner cost
By policie and manhod to holde all his ennemies out
Danes / norwaies / scottes durst nat ones loke out
Suche drede all nacions had ensuynge the tyme
That kyng Edgar° regned by prouidence diuine
In progresse he passed ones in the yere
Eche quarter of the realme with his company

To ſe that his ſubiectes well ordred were
And the lawe obſerued / iuſtice with mercy
Than was none oppreſſion wronges nor iniury
Debate malice rancour myght nat be founde
True loue and charite was in all the londe

Kynge Edgar° approched the cite of legions
Nowe called Cheſtre / ſpecified afore
Where .viii. kynges mette of diuers nacions
Redy to gyue Edgare reuerence and honour
Legiance and fidelite depely ſworne full ſore
At the ſame cite : after to be obedient
Promyt at his callyng to come to his parliament

From the Caſtell he went to the water of Dee
By a priue poſturne through walles of the towne
The kyng toke his barge with mycle rialte
Rowyng vpwarde to the churche of ſaynt Johñ
The forſayd .viii. kynges with hym went alone
Kynge Edgar° kept the ſtorne / as moſt principall
Eche prince had an ore to labour withall

Whan the kynge had done his pylgrimage
And to the holy roode made oblacion
They entred agayne into the ſayd barge
Paſſynge to his place with great renowne
Than Edgare ſpake in prayſyng of the crowne
All my ſucceſſours may glad and ioyfull be
To haue ſuche homage honour and dignite

Alſo it is to be had in memory
That this ſayd Edgar° and his princis all

Came with great reuerence vnto the monastery
To worshyp saynt Werburge with mynde liberall
Where he gaue fredoms and priuileges speciall
With singular possessions of his charite
Confirmynge the olde grauntes by hye auctorite

This Edgar° was nominate in cronicles expresse
The floure of Englāde / regnyng as emperour
Lyke wise as Romulus to romains was of prowes
Cyrus to the persis / to the grekes their conquerour
Great Charles to frenchemen / to troians Hectour
Famous in victorye preignant in wysdome
Vertuous and pacient / feruent in deuocion
Henric°. li°. b.
Auctor opum vindex scelerum / largitor honorum
Sceptriger Edgarus regna superna petit.
Hic alter Solomon / legum pater / orbita pacis
Quod claruit bellis / claruit inde magis.
Templa deo / tēplis monachos / monachis dedit agros :
Nequitie lapsum / iusticieq; locum.

Also from the byrthe of our blessed sauiour
A thousande fyfty yere / and seuyn expresse
In the tyme of saynt Edwarde kyng and confessour
As William Malvesbury beareth wytnes
Than Leofricus a man of great mekenes
Was erle of Chestre and duke of merciens
Son to duke Leoffwin by liniall discence

This noble Leofric sayth policronicon
Of his deuocion and benigne grace

Namely by the counſell and vertues mocion
Of his lady Godith countes whiche was
Reedified churches decayed in many a place
Alſo he founded the monaſtery of Leonence
By the towne of Herford / and the place of Wenlecence

This erle repareled a noble olde monaſtery
Eueſham vpon Auen / gaue them great riches
Alſo founder was of the abbay in couentre
Made the cite free for loue of his counteſſe
At the cite of Cheſtre of his great goodnes
He repared the College churche of ſaynt Johñ
Endowed it with riches and enormentes many one

This erle of Cheſtre the ſayd Leofricus
Of his charite / and feruent deuocion
To the honour of god / reedified full gracious
The mynſtre of Werburge within the ſayd towne
Gaue unto it riches and ſingular poſſeſſion
Endowed the ſayd place with fredoms and liberte
And ſpeciall priuileges confirmed by auctorite

So the ſayd place encreaſed in honour
In great poſſeſſions / fredoms / and richeſſe
With ſingular deuocion vnto our ſauiour
And prayſe to ſaynt Werburge theyr patroneſſe
The chanons obſerued vertue and clennes
Daily augmentyng by diuine ſufferaunce
Unto the comyng to this lande of normans

¶ Of the comyng of Willyam conquerour to this lãde and howe Hug. Lupe his ſyſter ſonne was founder of

The yere of grace .M. lixe and thyescour
The .xiii. day of the moneth of october
The duke of Normandy / William conquerour
Pight a stronge batell / displayed his baner
Of normans and frenchemen hauynge great power
Subdued kyng Harold / opteyned all the londe
Was coronate at London / made saxons all bonde

For diuerse great causes he came to this countre
First for deth of Alured his nere kynsman
The proscripcion of Robert archebisshop of Cant'bury
The periury of Harolde agaynst conscience playne
The promys of saynt Edwarde made to hym certayne
That the sayd Wylliam shulde enioye the crowne
If the kyng departed without succession

A generall counsell was celebrate at London
That all bysshops sees by helpe of the conquerour
From borowes shulde be translate to a famous towne
Within their dioces / to the greatter honour
Ryght so they all were / sayth myn auctour
Also the see of Lichefeld / was translate to Chester
By helpe and sufferaunce of the bysshop Peter

With Wylliam conquerour came to this region
A noble worthy prynce nominate Hug. Lupus
The dukes son of Britayne / and his syster son
Flourynge in chiualry bolde and victorious
Manfull in batell / liberall and vertuous
To whom the kyng gaue for his enheritaunce

The counte of Chellhire with the appurtinaunce

By victorie to wynne the forſayd Erledom
Frely to gouerne it as by conqueſt right
Made a ſure chartre to hym and his ſucceſſion
By the ſwerde of dignite to holde it with myght
And to calle a parlement to his wyll and ſyght
To ordre his ſubiectes after true iuſtice
As a prepotent prince / and ſtatutes to deuiſe

This valeant knyght with a myghty hoſt
Deſcended from London to wynne the ſayd counte
But the lordes of Chellhire roſe from euery coſt
Agaynſt hym made batell and had the victorie
Thyes they preuayled agaynſt the erle trulie
After he optayned to his fame and honour
The erledom of Cheſtre entred as a conquerour

He gaue to his knyghtes after theyr deſire
Lordſhyps and franches / and great poſſeſſion
With riche mariages within all Chellhire
Exalted his ſeruauntes to hye promocion
Unto holy churche had ſpecial deuocion
Maynteynge iuſtice / commendyng vertue
Depolyng vice by the helpe of Jeſu

After the departure of his vncle the conquerour
Whan William Ruff. toke the regalite
Than bleſſed Anſelme the famous doctour
Dyd viſet this lande oft tymes of his charite
Glad to reſourme / and brynge vnto vnite
Where was debate / and mycle diuiſion

By diligent labour and good exhortacion

This forsayd erle of his benignite
Interiously louynge holy religion
Repleit with vertue and feruent charite
Sende for sayne Anselme vnto London
To come to Chestre at his peticion
And there for to founde a religious place
In honour of Werburge by diuine grace

Blessed Anselme at the erles supplicacion
Came vnto Chestre with gladde chere shortly
Where he founded an abbaye of holy religion
A pleasaunt place and a noble monasterye
In worshyp of god / and sayne Werburge sothely
The yere of grace by full computacion
A thousande .iiii. score .xiii. yere alon

All secular prestes / and chanons also
Within the sayd place afore tyme dwellyng
Were clerely dismyssed / and letten go
Religious monkes perfect in lyuynge
Receyued were gladly their rule professynge
Sayne Anselme ordeyned Ric° of Beccens
To be their abbot with great preeminence

Landes / rentes / libertes / and great possession
Franches / fredoms / and priuileges riall
Were gyuen mekely to that foundacion
Maners / borowes / townes / with the people thrall
And many faire churches / chapels withall
Wardes and mariages were gyuen that season
Werburge. q.i.

To god and ſaynt Werburge cauſe of deuocion

Kyng Wyllyam Ruff. ſon to the conquerour
Confirmed the foundacion / with great auctorite
Endowed the monaſtery with mycle honour
Of fredoms / franches / alſo liberte
The place that tyme was made as fre
As the ſayd erle was in his caſtell
Or as hert myght thynke / or tonge myght tell

Saynt Anſelme departed thence vnto London
And was made archebiſſhop of Canturbury
To the place he gaue a ſure confirmacion
With ſingular priuileges to be had in memory
Of whom it is written here folowyng truly
Hic vir dum vixit ertirpantes maledixit
Werburge iura preſentia ſine futura.

This noble prince gaue of his charite
Riall riche enormentes vnto the ſayd place
Coopes / croſſes / Jewels of great rialte
Chales / cenſures / veſtures / and landes dyd purchace
A librarie of bokes to rede and ſynge there was
Of whiche riall iewels and bokes ſome remayne
Within the ſayd monaſtery to this day certayne

The founder alſo buylded within the monaſterie
Many myghty places / conuenient for religion
Compaſed with ſtronge walles on the weſt partie
And on the other ſyde with Walles of the towne
Cloſed at euery ende with a ſure poſtron
In ſouth part the cimiterie inuironed rounde about

For a ſure defence ennemies to holde out

The .ix. yere aftre this riall foundacion
This noble founder the .xxvii. day of July
Departed towarde the heuenly mancion
Next whom his ſon Richarde ſucceded truly
Than regnyng in honour the firſt kyng Henry
Alſo the place had their fraunches and fredom
Afore the ſayd cite a hundreth yere and one

¶ Howe ſaynt Werburge taught her monke and chaplayne to kepe paciens for his greatter merite and glorye to come. Cap. xvii.

After the tranſlacion of Cheſtre monaſterye
From ſecular chanons to monkes religious
By helpe of Anſelme archebiſſhop of Canturburye
Supportyng therto the founder Hug. Lupus
As afore is ſpecified full memorous
A monke there dwelled of vertuous diſpoſicion
Under obedience / nominate dan Symon

This brother Simon his tyme well vſyng
Howe in vertuous ſtudy / howe in contemplacion
Howe in deuout prayer / howe buſely wryttynge
Somtyme in ſolace / and honeſt recreacion
Obſerued deuoutly his holy religion
Obedience / pacience / and wylfull pouerte
Mekenes / meditacion / with pure chaſtite
For whiche examples and ſignes of vertue
Diuers of his bretherne repleit with enuy
Were fully confederate entendyng to ſubdue
This honeſt preſt by malice and policy

They layd to his charge open wronges and iniury
They punyſſhed & oppreſſed hym with great affliction
Dayly augmentyng by ſubtyll colluſion

Dan Symon offendyng no brother at all
Obſerued pacience / euer callynge for grace
Wepyng lamentyng with ſyghes cordiall
His fortune vnfrendly remediles / in that caſe
Entended to depart to ſome other place
Of a ſcrupulous conſcience / ſeyng no redreſſe
Was redy to procede plonged in heuynes

Werburge appered to this monke in viſion
Bryghter than Phebus in his meridian ſpere
My ſeruaunt ſhe ſayd callyng hym vpon
Why be ye ſo ſad / and heuy of chere ?
Wheder entende ye ? ſhewe the mater clere
Alas he ſayd ma dame and patroneſſe
For ſorowe I can nat my peynes expreſſe

Diuers of my bretherne ben greued at me
Vexyng me dayly with great tribulacion
Cauſeles on my part deſerued trule
In worde or en dede gyuyng none occaſion
I can nat be quiet amonge that congregacion
Wherfore ſwete lady vnder your licence
I purpoſe to departe in ſauynge my conſcience

Saynt Werburge pacified his mynde and entent
With wordes of comfort and holy ſcripture
Made hym be humble in hert and pacient
Thy ſufferaunce ſhalbe great ioye and pleaſure

And for thy pacience thou maist be sure
To haue reward in blis perpetuall
At thy departure from this lyfe mortall

Wherwith saynt Werburge departed sodeinl
To the blys of heuyn euer endurynge
The monke was meke in hert and mery
Obserued her doctrine this lyfe continuyng
Gaue good example of perfect lyuynge
Unto his bretherne / and at his departure
For his pacience passed to eternall pleasure

¶ Howe sondes rose vp within the salt see agaynst Hil burghee by saynt Werburge at the peticion of the constable of Chestre. Ca.xviii.

The seconde erle of Chestre after the conquest
Was erle Richard / son to Hug. Lupus
Whiche Richarde entended all thyng to the best
To visite saynt Winifride in hert desirous
Upon his iourney went / myn auctour sayth thus
Deuoutly to holy well in pylgrimage
For his great merite and goostly aduantage

Whan the wicked walshemen herd of his comyng
After a meke maner vnto that party
They made insurrection inwardly gladdyng
Descended from the mountaynes most furiously
Agaynst the erle raised a cruell company
Betwyt hym and Chestre lettynge the kyngis way
Purposynge to slee or take hym for a praye
Werburge. q.iii.

The erle ſon perceyued theyr malicious entent
In all haſt poſſible ſende to Cheſtre ſecretly
To warne his conſtable by loue and commaundemt
Wyllyam the ſon of Nigell / to rayſe a great army
To mete hym at Balyngwerke right ſone and ſpedely
For his deliueraunce from deth and captiuite
Of the wyld walſhemen / without humanite

The conſtable congregate in all goodly haſt
A myghty ſtronge hoſt / in theyr beſt arraye
Towarde Hilburghee on iourney ridyng faſt
Truſtyng vpon ſhippes all them to conuaye
Whiche was a riall rode that tyme nyght and daye
And whan they theder came ſhyppyng none there was
To carie all them ouer in conuenient ſpace

Alas what hert may thynke / or tonge well expreſſe ?
The doloꝛous greuaunce / and great lamentacion
That the hoſt made / for loue and tendernes
Knowynge their great maiſter in ſuche perſecucion
Some wept and wayled without conſolacion
Some ſighed and ſobbed / ſome were in extaſy
Without perfect reaſon / alas what remedy ?

Wyllyam the conſtable moſt carefull man on lyue
Of his myſfoꝛtune in ſuche extreme neceſſite
Called to hym a monke there dwellyng contemplatyue
Required hym for counſayle and prayer for his charite
The monke exhoꝛted hym to knele vpon his kne
Humblie to beſeke Werburge his patroneſſe
For helpe and remedy in ſuche great diſtreſſe

The conſtable content anone began to praye
O bleſſed Werburge and virgin pure
I beſeke the mekely helpe me this day
That we may tranſcende this ryuer ſafe and ſure
To ſaue and defende my lorde from diſcomfiture
And here I promytte to god and the alone
To offre to the a gyfte at my comyng whome

Whiche prayer ended with wepyng and langour
Beholde and conſydre well with your goſtly ee
The infinite goodnes of our ſauiour
For like as to Moiſes deuided the redde ſee
And the water of Jordan obeyed to Joſue
Ryght ſo the depe riuer of Dee made diuiſion
The londes drye appered in ſyght of them echone

The conſtable conſyderynge / and all the company
This great myracle tranſcendyng nature
Prayſed and magnified our lorde god almyghty
And bleſſed Werburge the virgin pure
They went into wales vpon the londes ſure
Deliuered their lorde from drede and enmite
Brought hym in ſafe garde agayne to Cheſtre cite

The ſayd Wyllyam conſtable came to the monaſterye
Thanked ſaynt Werburge with meke ſupplicacion
Fulfylled his promes made in extremite
Offred to the place the village of Neuton
Afterwarde he founded the abbay of Norton
And where the hoſt paſſed / ouer betwix bondes
To this day ben called the conſtable londes

¶ Howe Matild̃ countesse of Chestre counsellyng her husband̃ agaynst the monastery of Chestre was drowned at Barflewe with many other mo. Cap.xix.

After the decesse of Hug. Lupe prenominate
Richard̃ his son .vii. yeres of age
Was elect Erle by the kyng and creat
With counsaile gouerned his landes and heritage
At yeres of discrecion he toke in mariage
The lady Matild / nece to the first kynge Henry
Doughter to erle Stephan (sayth the history)

At his begynnyng he was a benefactour
A founder to the place by landes and possession
By franches and libertes / ayde / helpe / and succour
Gyuen to the abbay / augmentyng the foundacion
Proued by his actes of singular deuocion
Enduryng long tyme / tyll that his lady
By wycked counsaile moued hym the contrarye

It is red in scripture howe quene Jesabell
Ambicious of honour agaynst all ryghtousnes
Peruerted her lorde Achas / kyng of Jsraell
To sle Nabath for his vineyard doubtles
Also Athalia / the bible sheweth expresse
Commaunded to slee the kynges children all
That she myght regne sole princesse imperiall

Ryght so this Matild̃ clerely refusyng
The steppes of Sara / Rebecca / and Rachell
And other good matrons : but mutacion takyng
Of these wycked women Athali and Jesabell

Peruerted her husbande by her subtyll counsell
To aske of the abbot the maner place of Salton
With the appurtinaunce by famous opinion

Thabbot by counsell of his bretherne all
Denyed to graunt their propre possession
The patrimony of Christ and their landes seuerall
To the sayd erle Richarde and his succession
Gyuen by his father at the first foundacion
For whiche thyng the erle and Matild his lady
Hated thabbot / his bretherne / and the monastery

The erle and his countesse went to Normandy
To vysit their frendes and colyns naturall
So dyd the princis / their father kyng Henry
With many estates of the blodde riall
These princis fauored no saron at all
The erle conominat in malice and hate
Agaynst the monasterie / as a man endurate

Satan sende forth his seruauntes in hast
To enfect the erles hert with venomous poison
The bedyls of Belial attempted full fast
The erle and his countesse / to kepe they opinion
Detractours flaterers cause of promocion
Trustyng therby to opteyne fauour and grace
Excited their myndes agaynst the sayd place

The erle sore attempted by his gostly ennemy
By wycked people callyng hym vpon
Namely by the counsell of Matild his lady
Entended to alter and chaunge the foundacion

Of the ſayd abbay to a nother religion
Conſirmed the ſame ſweryng moſt depely
At his whom comyng to Englande / from Normandy

Thabbot and couent knowyng this great perell
By ſpeciall louers and frendes ſecretly
Were penſyue and ſorowfull (it was no meruell)
Their hertes plonged in wo and miſery
By naturall reaſon hauyng no remedy
Conſydering his malice encreaſed more and more
Agaynſt the monaſtery / with wordes of rigour

They had their hope truſt and confidence
In bleſſed Werburge their patroneſſe
With wepyng eies clere in conſcience
They called her vpon in all their diſtreſſe
O glorious virgin lady and ſwete mai tres
Metigate the malice by ti y benignite
Of Richarde our lorde / mekely we praye the

Suffre hym neuer to diſtroye thy place
By wycked conſell malice and enuy
Founded and dedicate by heuenly grace
In honour of god / and the ſpecially
Protect / defende / and ſaue thy monaſtery
Thy landes / thy libertes / and thy ſeruauntes all
As thou afore tyme haſt done continuall

In meane tyme the erle entended ſpedely
From thens to depart / and retourne agayne
To fulfyll his entent agaynſt the monaſterye
By the ſubtyll mocion of his counteſſe playne

A ſhip was prepared / all thyng redy certayne
The prince of England / the erle and his lady
Toke ſhippyng at Barflewe and all their comp

Certaynly they ſayled but a lytell ſpace
Whan agaynſt them roſe a contrarie wynde
The mariners to gyde the ſhip had no grace
The ſtormes ſo great hiduous agaynſt kynde
On a rocke they ranne / no remedy myght fynde
Incontinently the ſhip barſt all in ſondre
The erle and his felliſhip were turned all undre

No man ne childe ſcaped from deth that tyme
But one pore ſeruaunt whiche ſwamme to the londe
Suche was theyr fortune by ſufferaunce diuyne
Many of theyr bedis were neuer fonde
Thus was their power made thrall and bonde
Theyr lyues were loſt within a ſort ſpace
Whiche were cruell ennemyes vnto her place

On ſaynt Katharins day at after mydnyght
Whan matens were ended / and bretherne gon
Some mournyng waylyng for drede full ryght
Some buſie in prayer and contemplacion
Werburge appered to the ſecriſtan alone
Sayenge : ye may be ioyfull in god and mery
Erle Richarde is drowned your mortall ennemy

The ſame glad tidyng ſhewed an honeſt woman
Tollyng at the churche dore the ſayd day and hour
As ſhe was commaunded by Werburge incertan
To thabbot and couent plonged in great langour

(Whiche myracle herde) they prayed our sauiour
And blessed Werburge / with hert deuoutly
Syngyng Te deum full solemply

¶ Howe a great fire like to distroye all Chestre by myracle ceased / whan the holy shryne was borne about the towne by the monkes. Cap.xx.

FRom the incarnacion of our sauiour
A thousand / a hundreth yere .lxxx. also
On sonday in mydlenton / the .viii. hour°
Whan euery parysshen they^r churche went to
As all christen people of dutie shulde do
A fyre by infortune rose up sodeinly
All flamyng feruent or the people dyd espy

This fearefull fire encreased more and more
Piteously wastyng hous / chambre / and hall
The citezens were redy their cite to succour
Shewed all their diligence / and labour continuall
Some cried for water / and some for hookes dyd call
Some vsed other engins by crafte and policy
Some pulled downe howses afore the fire truly

Other that were impotent / mekely gan praye
Our blessed lorde / on them to haue pite
Women and children cried out and waile away
Beholdyng the daunger and perill of the cite
Prestes made hast diuine seruice to supple
Redy for to succour their neyghbours in distres
(As charite required) and helpe their heuynes

The fire contynued without any ceſſynge
Feruently flamyng euer contynuall
From place to place meruaylouſly rennyng
As it were tynder conſumyng toure and wall
The citezens ſadly laboured in vayne all
By the policie of man was founde no remedy
To ceſſe the fire ſo feruent and myghty

Alas great heuynes it was to beholde
The cite of Troye all flamyng as fire
More pite of Rome cite was manyfolde
Feruently flagrant / empeiryng the empire
As to the quantite the cite of Cheſtire
Myght be aſſembled this tyme in like caſe
To the ſayd citees remedeles alas

Many riall places fell adowne that day
Riche marchauntes houſes brought to diſtruction
Churches and chapels went to great decay
That tyme was brent the more part of the towne
And to this preſent day is a famous opinion
Howe a myghty churche a mynſtre of ſaynt Michaell
That ſeaſon was brent and to ruyne fell

Whan the people ſawe their power inſufficient
By diligent labour / wyſdome and policye
To ſubdue the fire / but ſtyll dyd augment
To almyghty god they dyd call and crye
And to ſaynt Werburge the gracious lady
For helpe and ſuccour in ſuche wretchednes
Wepyng and waylyng for woo and heuynes

Thabbot and couent of the ſayd monaſterie
Religiouſly lyuyng in holy conuerſacion
Repleit with mekenes and feruent charite
Toke the holy ſhryne in prayer and deuocion
Syngyng the letanie bare it in proceſſion
Compaſſyng the fyre in euery ſtrete and place
Truſtyng in Werburge for helpe aide and grace.

Whan they had ended the holy letanye
From place to place procedyng in ſtacion
Anone a ſtremyng ſterre appered ſodaynlye
A white doue deſcended afore the congregacion
Approchyng as to helpe them / a ſigne of conſolacion
The people reioyſed of that goſtly ſyght
And prayſed ſaynt Werburge with power and myght

So by the merite of this bleſſed virgin
The fire began to ceſſe / a myracle clere
Nat paſſyng the place / where the holy ſhryne
Was borne by the bretherne / as playnly dyd appere
The citezens dyd helpe in their beſt manere
The feruent great fire extincted was in dede
By grace aboue nature / in ſtory we may rede

The clergie the burges / and the comons all
Conſyderyng the goodnes of this virgin bright
With tendernes of hert and loue in ſpeciall
Magnified and prayſed our lorde god almyght
And bleſſed Werburge by day alſo nyght
Whiche hath preſerued of her great charite
Cheſtre from diſtruction in extreme neceſſite

Unto her shryne the people all went
The clergie before in maner of procession
Thankyng this virgin with loue feruent
For her mercy and grace shewed them vpon
Deuoutly knelynge there made oblacion
Sayeng full sadly / we shall neuer able be
The place to recompence for this dede of charite

¶ A breue reherfall of the myracles of saynt Werburge after her translacion to Chestre. Cap.xxi.

THese forefayd myracles and signes celestiall
By diuine sufferaunce shewed manifestly
Magnifien this virgin and blessed moiniall
With mycle worshyp honour and victory
Playnly declaryng vnto your memory
What singular grace / worshyp / and excellence
Our sauiour shewed for his spouse openly
As is reherfed at masse in her sequens

To expresse all myracles written in the place
In a boke nominate the thrid passionarye
It wolde require a longe tyme and space
To the reders tedious (no meruayle sothly)
Where we omytte to writte of them specially
But touched in generall vnto your audience
To reioyse and comfort your hertes inwardly
As ye may considre in her sequens

Certaynly it is knowen by bokes expresse
Sith that saynt Werburge came to Chestre cite
By the power of god and myracle doutles

She hath defended the towne from ennemite
From barbarike nacions full of crudelite
Of whom we haue shewed with diligence
Preseruyng her seruauntes / and the monastery
As is declared in her true sequence

Also of her goodnes preserued she hase
The sayd towne from fire in extreme necessite
Many diuers tymes to their ioye and solace
Releuyng the citezens in wo and penalite
For it is well knowen by olde antiquite
Sith the holy shryne came to their presence
It hath ben their comfort and gladnes truly
As playnly appereth in her sequens

Also to blynde men she hath gyuen syght
To dombe men speche right perfectly
To deffe men their heryng pleasaunt and right
And helth to sicke men repleit with debilite
Delyuered prisoners from captiuite
Passage to lame men / to mad men intelligence
Suche myracles shewed this blessed lady
As ye may vnderstande in her sequens

Women with childe by her had good delyueraunce
Virgins defended from shame and vilany
Her seruauntes were cured from wofull greuaunce
Marchantes and mariners delyuered from ieopardye
Other were saued from hangyng shamfully
A speciall comfort succour and defence
To all carefull creatures seking for remedy
By singular grace / as sayth the sequens

No wofull perſon in payne and wretchednes
Man woman childe / who ſo euer they be
Comynge to the abbay with perfit mekenes
Makyng ſupplicacion to this ladye free
But they departed ioyful and merie
To theyr dwellyng place by her beniuolence
And for their lyuyng had all thyng neceſſarie
As written is playnly in her ſequens

For whiche great myracles and ſignes continuall
This bleſſed Werburge floure of humilite
Of the people is called for grace ſupernall
Patrones of Cheſtre / protectrice of the countre
Where next our ſauiour and his mother Marie
She hath great honour prayſe and preeminence
As moſt condigne to beare the principalite
In witnes wherof recordeth her ſequens

This holy abbaſſe and lady imperiall
Hath ben preſident in Cheſtre monaſterie
Theyr truſt / theyr treaſure / and defence ſpeciall
In mycle reuerence .bii. hundreth yere trulie
And ſo ſhall continue by grace of god almyghty
To the worldes ende in hie magnificence
To whom be honour worſhip and glorie
Euer to endure / as ſayth her ſequens

¶ A charitable mocion and a deſyre to all the inhabytauntes within the countie palatine of Cheſtre for the monaſterie. Cap.xrii.

Ye worthye nobles of the weſt partye
Conſidre in your mynde with hye diſcrecion
The perfite goodnes of this ſwete ladye
We mean ſaynt Werburge nowe at this ſeaſon
Whiche hath ben your helpe and ſingular tuicion
And ſo euer wylbe / haue this in your mynde
Whan ye to her call with humble ſupplicacion
Wherfore to the monaſterye be neuer vnkynde

Remembre / at the foundacion of the ſayd place
your predeceſſours and forefathers redy were
To gyue for their ſoule helth by ſingular grace
Parcell of their landes and poſſeſſions mere
To our ſauiour and to ſaynt Werburge clere
Redy to offre them with humble hert and mynde
In perfit oblacion with Hug. Lupe their foundere
Wherfore to the monaſterie be neuer vnkynde

Many helde their landes of the ſayd monaſterie
By tenure grand ſeriant / and ſome by homage
By tenur' franke almoigne / other by fealtie
With ſeruice de chiualer' / and ſome by eſcuage
Some by petit ſeriant / and by tenur' burgage
As in their euidentes and grauntes they may fynde
Tres maners de rentes / with tenur' villenage
Wherfore to the monaſterie be neuer vnkynde

The place hath ſpeciall franches and liberte
Hauynge certayne wardes of landes and mariage
Of diuers gentilmen within the ſayd counte
All theyr tenauntes and ſeruauntes haue fre paſſage
Within all cheſſhire without tolle and pillage

Suche auncient fredoms in their dedes they fynde
Gyuen by theyr founders for goſtly auauntage
Wherfore to the monaſterie be neuer vnkynde

The erle gaue the place many great fredoms
Within Cheſtre cite / whiche ben knowen of olde
With ſingular priuileges and auncient cuſtoms
Saynt Werburge faire / with profites manyfolde
That no marchandiſe ſhulde be bought ne ſolde
Enduryng the faire days (in writyng as we fynde)
But afore thabbay gate / to haue and to holde
Wherfore to the monaſterie be neuer vnkynde

Therfore lordes barons / ye rulers of the countre
We you now exhorte in our ſauiour
Diſcretly conſidre with your goſtlie eie
The myght of this mayden and chaſte floure
Shewed by myracles euery day and hour
Whan ſhe was required with true hert and mynde
In all buſines ſhe hath ben their protectour
Wherfore to the monaſterie be neuer vnkynde

Whan your forefathers haue ben in great perell
In ieoperdie of lyfe on ſee and on londe
Or like to be ſlayne by ennemies in batell
Or taken by warr[e] in priſon faſt bonde
Unto this virgin / as we underſtonde
Whan they called and cryed with contrite mynde
They eſcaped all daunger / cam whom ſafe and ſonde
Wherfore to the monaſterie be neuer vnkynde

Marchauntes paſſynge with marchaundiſe

From lande to lande truly entendyng
If they were taken with cruell ennemyse
Orels were put in perill of perillyng
If they to this virgin deuoutly praying
Made supplicacion with humble hert and mynde
Anone they opteyned theyr humble askyng
Wherfore to the monasterie be neuer vnkynde

If any of you vexed with infirmite
With sekenes incurable / or other vexacion
As wronges iniuries and other maladie
Unto saynt Werburge makyng intercession
And to her place promysyng an oblacion
With contrite hert and penitent mynde
They were soone cured from all affliction
Wherfore to the monasterie be neuer vnkynde

And you honest matrons remembre you all
The goodnes of this virgin full of grace
Whan ye in trauelyng vpon her do call
Or haue any relique sende from the place
ye fortune and spede well in short tyme and space
And diuers maydens louyng a chaste mynde
From vilany ben saued by her purchase
Wherfore to the monasterie be neuer vnkynde

But eche contray / shire / and congregacion
Some be disposed to vertues generall
And some to the contrarie proued by reason
Folowyng their mynde and appetite sensuall
Haue shewed unkyndnes to the place spirituall
And haue ben sore punysshed / take this in mynde

To all other folowynge and example ſpeciall
Wherfore to the monaſtery be neuer vnkynde

Ther° was neuer man of high nor lowe degree
Lorde / baron / knyght / marchaunt / and burges
Attemptyng to infringe their rightes and liberte
Remaynyng in the ſame malice and wyckednes
But if they repent ſhortly theyr bulynes
Aſkyng abſolucion to theyr conſcience blynde
Uengeance on them doth lyght doutles
Wherfore to the monaſtery be neuer vnkynd

Diuers malefactours agayne good conſcience
Attemptyng to take there ſeuerall poſſeſſion
By ſubtell policy and wrong feyned euidens
By proued periury and fals colluſion
Whiche in theyr iniury and wronge meſpriſion
Without repentauns in theyr conſciens blynde
Sodenly haue ben drowed a ſharpe punycion
Wherfore to the monaſtery be neuer vnkynde

Other haue be glad to alienat the patronage
Of certayne churches by malice and enuy
By a fals enqueſt for theyr owne auauntage
Defraudyng the right of the holy monaſtery
Suche euill doers remaynynge in theyr tyranny
Without ſatiſfaccion in their conſciens blynde
Lyke wretches expired moſte myſerably
Whrfore to the monaſtery be neuer vnkynde

Other haue ben buſy ſerching day and nyght
To infringe theyr fraunchis and fridome auncient

By fals recordes oppugnant to ryght
As hath ben proued by persones indifferent
yet they haue procured and sought wronge iugement
Agaynst their libertes in conscience blynde
Sodayne and euyll deth folowed them consequent
Wherfore to the monasterye be neuer vnkynde

Some other haue be parauenture on late
Studious to disquiet the place the company
And diuers libertes haue alienate
Also tolled their franchis fraudulently
From the sayd place well knowen in memory
Suche mysdoers we moue in conscience blynde
To maende their wronges lest payne come sodeynly
Wherfore to the monasterie be neuer vnkynde

Suche malefactours consydre nat discretly
Howe all suche landes libertes and fredoms
Were gyuen to Christ and ben his patrimonye
And nat allonly to religious persons
For all suche fraunches priuileges possessions
Of charite were gyuen of pure conscience and mynde
To god and saynt Werburge with great deuocions
Wherfore to the monasterie be neuer vnkynde

Nowe for to make a small conclusion
We well perceyue in auncient bokes olde
All suche transgressours / holdyng their opinion
Obstinate in malice indurate and bolde
Some haue ben slayne / some drowned in water colde
Some shamfully hanged rebukyng their kynde
Some wretchedly departed / some cruciat manyfolde
Wherfore to the monasterie be neuer vnkynde

¶ A litell oryson or prayer to the blessed virgine sayntе Werburge by the translatour of this werke. Ca.xxiii.

O Blessed Werburge and virgin glorious
Descended by auncetrie of blod victoriall
Doughter to kynge Wulfer° / and Ormenild bertuous
O sufferayne lady and famous moiniall
With hert and true mynde on the I call
Thou art my succour / my helpe in all distres
Defende and saue me from peynes infernall
By thy meke prayer swete patrones

O rutilant gemme clerer than the crisstall
O redolent rose repleit with suauite
Whiche for the loue of thy spouse eternall
Refused hast all vayne pleasures transetore
Honours / riches / and secular dignite
Nowe regnyng in heuyn as a quene doutles
Praye for thy seruaunt to the lorde of mercy
Mekely I beseke the swete patronesse

O sufferayne lady full of singular vertue
Myndyng most religion from thy infancy
Elect to the a spouse our sauiour Jesu
Professed obedience at the house of Ely
Where thou obserued the sensuals thre
By grace aboue nature playn to expresse
Opteyne me power to haue victory
Ageynst myn ennemyes swete patrones

O floure of virgins and comly creature
Syngyng with angels in the heuenly toure

Transcendyng the saphir and diamounde pure
In worship prayseyng beaute and decur
What tong can reherse thy ioy and honour
Whiche is ineffable for man to expresse
Beseke thy spouse our blessyd sauiour
To graunte me mercy swete patrones

For thy great vertu and hie discrecion
Chosen thou was a pyler here to be
Of diuers monasteryes to encrease religion
By thy goostly doctryne and humilite
Exsample thou gaue of perfit charite
Unto thi subgettis as a kynde maistres
Helpe me thy seruaunt of thy benignite
To please my maker swete patrones

No maruell it was thought thy subgettis all
Were vertuous and perfect in contemplacion
Under suche a ruler a hed and principall
Whole goostly example and exortation
Were correspondent accordyng in one
Thy precept and deed were knit with mekenes
In this vale misery be my protection
I humble the require swete patrones

Glorious abbasse and floure of chastite
Carboncle shenyng bothe day and nyght
All this region by thy noble progenie
And hy the is decorat vnder god almyght
The presens of thy blessyd body right
Reioisith thy seruauntis in all distres
Thou art our refuge and lanterne of light

Succour thy ſeruauntes ſwete patrones

O pereles princes lady imperiall
O gemme of holynes and noble preſident
Comfort to all creatures in paynes thrall
Releuyng all ſecke feble and impotent
A myrrour of mekenes to euery pacient
Whoſe myracles magnifien thy great goodnes
Defende thy ſeruaunt from greuous turment
By thy ſupplicacion ſwete patroneſſe

O noble ſufferayne and ſingular protectrice
Of thy true ſubiectes by ſpeciall grace
In all neceſſite a ſure mediatrice
From greuous oppreſſion preſeruyng thy place
A lanterne of lyght in eche wofull caſe
To illumine thy people plonged in heuynes
With great conſolacion and goſtly ſolace
Nowe lyghten our conſcience ſwete patroneſſe

Swete louely lady mekely I the praye
For thy great mekenes and perfect charite
Make thou interceſſion both nyght and day
For thy true ſeruauntes vnto the trinite
That we may opteyne here grace and mercy
And of our ſynne to haue forgyuenes
Afterwarde to come to eternall glorie
Helpe nowe and euer ſwete patroneſſe

¶ A breue cōcluſion of this litell werke vnto the reders by the tranſlatour. Cap.xxiiii.

Werburge f.i.

With trembly̆nge penne and hand full of drede
In termes rude translate nowe haue we
The noble hiſtorye of ſaynt Werburge in dede
Beſekyng all them for their good humanite
Whiche this litell proces ſhall beholde and ſe
For to adde and miniſſhe and cauſe reformacion
Where nede requireth after your diſcrecion

At her lyfe hiſtoriall example may take
Euery great eſtate / quene / duches / and lady
To encreace in vertue / and ſynne to forſake
To obſerue mekenes and prayer deuoutly
With pacience of hert / and almeſdede truly
If thou be widowe / her lyfe well folowyng
Thou mayſt be ſure in blis to haue a wonnyng

If thou be religious / wearyng blacke veſture
Take good example at this holy abbaſſe
Her lyfe wyll teche the how thou ſhult endure
In holy religion / opteynyng mycle grace
With mekenes / meditacion / meſure in eche place
And howe thou ſhalt kepe thy ſenſuals thre
Conſideryng in heuen thy reward to be

If thou be a virgin of hie or low degre
Takyng imitacion of this virgin bryght
Thou mayſt well obſerue the floure of chaſtite
And thy ſpouſe ſhalbe the lorde moſt of myght
On whom if thou attende redy day and nyght
Thou ſhalt haue merite as recordeth ſcripture
With .v. wiſe virgins after thy departure

The cauſe mouyng vs this werke to begyn
It was to auoyde ſlouth and idelnes
And moſt for the loue of this holy virgin
Whiche is our ſufferayn lady and patrones
As for baudy balades full of wretchednes
And wanton wylde geſtis / we purpoſe none to make
For drede of lolyng tyme / clothed in veſture blake

Go forth litell boke / Jeſu be thy ſpede
And ſaue the alway from myſreportyng
Whiche art compiled for no clerke in dede
But for marchaunt men / hauyng litell lernyng
And that rude people therby may haue knowyng
Of this holy virgin / and redolent roſe
Which hath ben kept full longe tyme in cloſe

To all auncient poetes litell boke ſubmytte the
Whilom flouryng in eloquence facundious
And to all other / whiche preſent nowe be
Fyrſt to maiſter Chaucer / and Ludgate ſentencious
Alſo to preignaunt Barkley / nowe beyng religious
To inuentiue Skelton and poet laureate
Praye them all of pardon both erly and late

If there be any thynge within this litell boke
Pleaſaunt to the audience / contentyng the mynde
We praye all reders / whan they theron do loke
To gyue thankes to god maker of mankynde
Nat to the tranſlatour ignoraunt and blynde
For euery good dede / done in any coſt
It cometh allonly of the holy goſt.

Werburge. f.ii.

Almyghty god both one two and thre
We desire the with humble supplicacion
Saue holy churche of thy benignite
And all ministres in holy religion
Preserue the kyngis grace the Peeris the region
Defende our monasterie and thy seruantes all
And graunt vs by grace to come to blis eternall

Finis.

A balade to the auctour.

O thou disciple of Tully most famous
Nowe flourisshyng in the floures of glorious eloquēce
Like as appereth by your stile facundius
Full worthe laude prayse and preeminence
Put forth your werkes full sure of sentence
Whose auctour / what though vncertayne be his name
Of all the reders exalted shalbe in fame

Alas why shulde this delicious werke
Thus surely sette by pured science
To be examined by my rudenes all derke
Whiche knowe full well myn insufficience
Sith I haue lerned by longe experience
That dulled age in werkes of poetry
Must nedes gyue to poetes place and victory

Glorious god and kynge eternall
We magnifie thy name as is but ryght
Sith thou gaue to vs a floure most riall
Redolent in cronicles with historicall syght
Whiche nowe is departed from this temporall lyght
The present yere of this translacion
M.D.xiii. of Christis incarnacion

Cuius anime propicietur deus.

An other balade.

O frutefull hiſtore / o digne memoriall
Enbawmed with doctrine of vertues infinite
With termes exquiſed / and ſence retoriall
To ſpirituall hertes a ſingular delite
Fragrant and facunde / of engliſſhe exquiſite
Holſome in doctrine / for thoſe that it deſire
Auaunce you to rede it / for it is exquiſite
Folowynge theffect to kepe you from hell fire

Reioyſe Cheſtre / reioyſe ye religious
And thanke your maker of his beniuolence
That hath you gyuen ſuche treaſure precioufe
Aduocatrice / in your moſt indigence
O virgin werburge / of double excellence
Conſerue thy ſeruauntes dayly familier
Preſeruyng them from inconuenience
The for tenſue / that art theyr lode ſterre

Amonges the whiche to thyn honour
One of thy clientes / with morall retorique
Hath chaunged newly / o mayde moſt ſwete flour
Thy legende latine / to our language publique
Preſerue his ſoule / and make hym domeſtique
Within the heuyns / in whiche that thou art ſonke
With deth preuent / he myght nothyng replique
Harry Bradeſhaa of Cheſtre abbay monke

O cruell deth / o theffe vindicatyfe
To perſons vertuous ennemy mortall
Of this good clerke thou haſt abbreged the lyfe
Preuentyng hym with thy dede ſtronge fatall

yet in dispite of thy most venomus gall
He hath translate this legende profitable
And left it for holsome memoriall
To all his sequaces / a gyft most couenable

With polysshed termes / and good sence litterall
No place there voyde / but vertue abundeth
Theffect is manifest: for science ouer all
Rethorically thy sentence groundeth
All vices surely it confoundeth
Shewynge the legende of this mayde pure
Her shenyng lyke eche where redoundeth
Suche steppes folowyng / we hope in them tendure

An other balade to saynt werburge
With hert contrite accepte my supplicacion
Aydynge my fraylete and lyke vacillaunt
Renegate and contumace in all obstinacion
Bewrapt with all synne / detestable and recreaunt
Vouchsafe to supplie Jesu and geat graunt
Remyssion to haue of my synnes generall
Greuous and thrall / that I may the auaunt
A gentill Werburge / to thy doctrine me call

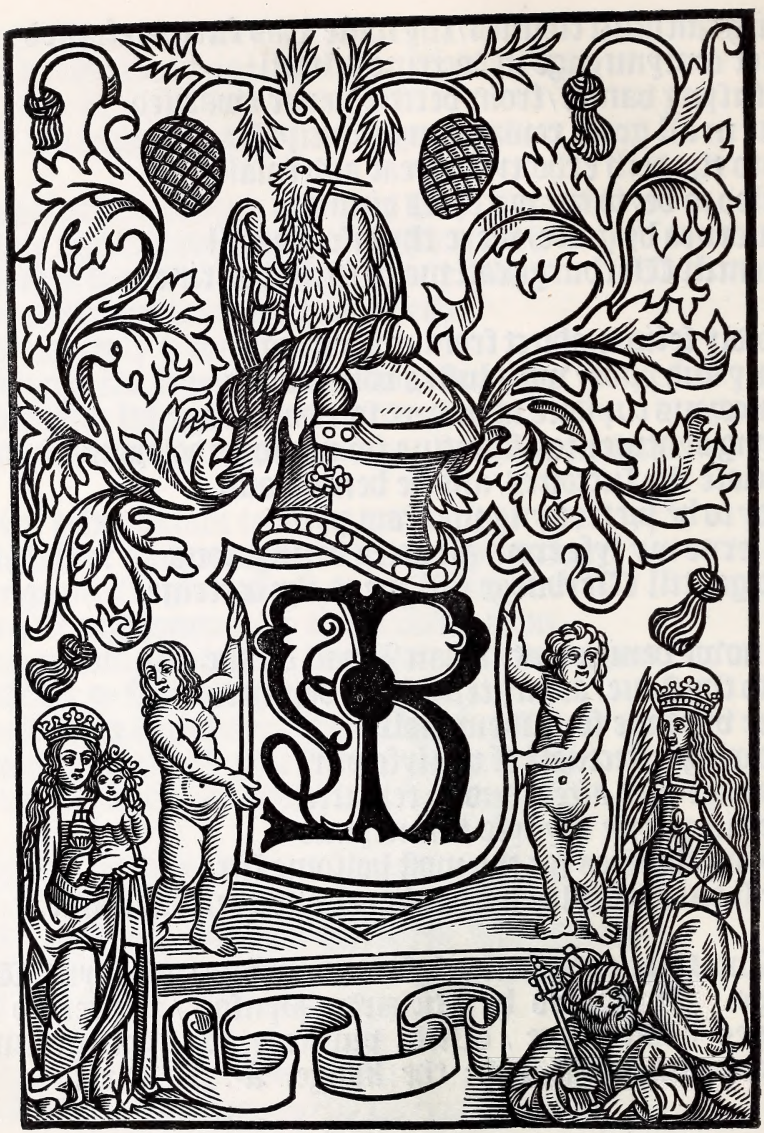
Wherfore thy father / thy mother Ermenild,
Enclined both to dedes catholique
Ruffine and Kenrede / thy bretherne were fulfild,
Both with great grace / through martyrdome both like
With diuers of thy kynne magnifique
Redact in the catholique papall
Geat me suche grace to voyde all synnes inique
And gentill Werburge to thy doctrine me call

With faithfull clennes / thy ſoule was ſure preſerued
Euer contynuynge in doctrine celicall
Refuſyng vanite / from vertue neuer ſwarued
But in all grace remaynyng principall
Unto thy deth exhortyng great and ſmall
Ruled to be / to the preceptes diuine
Gouerned by grace / were thy diſciples all
A gentill Werburge call me to ſuche doctrine

Wordly felicite abiect from my courage
Enuy and pride / with luſtes voluptuous
Rancorous cupidite myn hert ſore do aſwage
Byng oyntmentes ſanatiue for my ſores dolorous
Uncloſe thy ſuccours / and be beniuolous
Redy to be preſeruyng me from pyne
Gouerne my lyfe from all actes daungerous
And gentill Werburge call me to thy doctrine

Be nowe beniuolent / whan I ſhall on the call
Unto thy ſlaue / as my truſt hath ben ſure
Leue vnto me for a memoriall
Knowlege effectuall of thy lyfe pure
Lyuynge ther after / and ſo tendure
Euer in purite my lyfe to contynue
yeldyng thankes for thy moſt holſome lure
Chriſt ouer vs holde his hande / al vices teſchue. Amē.

¶ And thus endeth the lyfe and hiſtorye of ſaynt Werburge. Imprinted by Richarde Pynſon / printer to the kynges noble grace / With priuilege to hym graunted by our ſouerayne lorde the kynge. Aº. M D.xxi.



GLOSSARY.

INDEX.

GLOSSARY.

This Glossary is not intended so much to explain, as to exhibit in a tabular form those words now nearly obsolete which were in use at the time the poem was written.

A.

Accepte, accepted, 80.
Adred, alarmed, 160.
Ago, agone, gone, 116.
Albe, (tunic ?) a white vesture ordered to be worn by the clergy in administering the eucharist, 154.
Alienat, alienated,203, 204.
Allonly, all only, only, 174, 204, 209.
Ampliat, enlarged, 148.
Anendes, anent, in reference to, 100.
At after, after, 95, 193.
Attempted, tempted, 191.
Attempten, plural of attempt, 100.
Audacity, courage, 2.

B.

Befound, found, 8.
Ben, be, are, 1, 75, 111, 117, 134, 151, 186, 189, 202, 204.
Beneson, benediction, 90.
Beseke, beseech, 189.
Besely, busily, 1.
Besynes, business, 2.
Borde, "high board lord," those seated at the upper table at a feast, 60.
Both two, both the one and the other, 15, 57, 58.
Bowne, bent, prepared, 162.
Brenned, burned, 34, 39, 49, 139, 141.
Brent, burnt, 60,
Brutes, uncivilised people, 149, 152.
Browdred, embroidered, 60.
Buxum, obedient, 1.
Byforne, before, 38.

C.

Caduce, frail, feeble, 115, 118.
Canaby, canopy, 146.
Carle, churl, clown, 38.
Celebrate, celebrated, 146, 181.
Celicall, heavenly, 213.
Cemeterie, 151, 184.
Cesse, to stop, verb act. 195.
Chere, countenance, 102.
Chest, coffin, 125.
Circumfulced, surrounded by brightness, 76, 150, *circumfulgeo*.
Clerke, educated persons, 4, 209.
Clypped, called, 32.
Comen, plur. of come, 128, 144.
Compulacyon, computation, 5.
Condigne, worthy, 199.
Congregate, congregated, 188.
Conominat, akin, 191.
Consecrate, consecrated, 93.
Conynge, skill, 134.
Coronate, crowned, 115, 144, 147, 158, 175, 176, 181.
Corporace, corporate, a linen cloth spread under the chalice and paten at the eucharist, 154.

Cost, charge, also, side, 177, 182.
Costy, a son coté, on his side, 164.
Cosyns, kinsmen generally, 25, 170, 171, 191.
Cotidian, daily, 80, 143.
Counceyled, concealed, 45.
Countered, encountered, 9.
Covetyse, covetousness, 2.
Create, created, 2, 190.
Creature, creator, 1, &c. &c.
Cruciate, tormented, 101, 166, 204.
Crudelity, cruelty, 198.
Cubicle, bedchamber, 1, 77.
Cup, "to sit between the cup and the wall," probably a common term for a drunkard, 2.
Cure, a care or charge; as of a parish, &c. 54, 87, 107.

D.

Dan. master. 185, 186, from Dominus.
Daring, suffering pain, 98, from dare, pain. *Bailey's Dict.*

Dredefully daringe, i. e. slinking along for fear, as if they would hide themselves, from view.

> "The dere, in the dellun,
> They droupen and daren."
> *Anturs of Arthur at the Tarnewathelan.*

> "In this dale I droupe and dare.
> For dern dedes that done me dere."—*Minst.*

> "Now or thai darend all for drede,
> That war before so stout and gay."—*Ibid.*

"Blotir," to squat, skowke, ly close to the ground like a daring larke, or affrighted fowle.—*Cotgrave.*

Decorate, decorated, 75, 96, 120, 126, 206.
Decaur, 146, decur, 206, honour.
Dedicate, dedicated, 104.
Depayred, decayed, 125, deperir, *Fr.* disperdere, *Lat.*
Derogation, damage, 173.
Descryben, plur. of describe, 8.
Descrypcyon, for destruction, 97.
Desidery, desire, 56, 108.
Desse, high desse, seat of state, 61.
Devoyre, devoir, respect, 25, 58, 126.
Dight, clothed, 144.
Dolour, grief, 167.
Do way, begone, put aside, 67, 83.
Done, plur. of do, 67.
Dyfferre, defer, delay, 30.
Dygne, worthy, 109, 152, 211.
Dylated, magnified, published, 9, 75, 96, 150, 168.
Dylectacyon, delight, 27, 155.
Dyspent, spent, 94.
Dyversity, dissension, 89.
Dyvydent, dividing, 8, 10.

E.

Edified, built, from edifier, *Fr.* 151, 153, 158, 177.
Electe, elected, 85, 93, 159, 190.
Elevate, raised up, 48, 125, 126, 161.
Empaired, injured, 160.
Empeiryng, inflaming? 195.
Endurate, hardened, cruel, 159, 191.
Enforce, strengthen, 34.
Enormentes, ornaments, 154, 156, 165, 180, 184.
Enowrned, inurned, environed, 127.
Enquired, for required, 80.
Ensuing, pursuing, 41; during, 177.
Equipolent, of equal power, 11.
Equivalent, proportional, 167.
Expulse, expel, 6, 88, 111, 121, 142, 151, 152, 177.
Extincted, extinguished, 196.

F.

Facunde, 211.
Facundious, eloquent, 209, 210.

Feminity, womanhood, 61.
Fere, 76; in fere, 11, 59, 164, together in company. See Chaucer, Cant. Tales, v. 4748, 4814. Ang. S. fœra, fera, *socius*.
Ferre, far, 63.
Fisnamy, physiognomy, 103, 126.
Floures of experience, of approved worth, 5.
Flourynge, flourishing, 9, 23, 34, 135, 181, 209.
Followen, follow, 97.
Fragyll, light, vain, 81, 103.
Fragylyte, light conduct, 69.
Fraylte, inconstancy of mind, 3.

G.

Galway Scot, Scotch from Galloway, 173.
Galwedy, Galloway, from mediæval Latin word, Gallovidia, 162.
Gate, road, at no gate, no where, by no means, 89.
—— got, begot, 11, 12, 13, 14, 91, 118.
Gauntes, Gannets, or any geese, 97, 98.
Geaf, perhaps from gavel, progenies mascula; vide Skinner in voc. forens. Geaf therefore seems here to mean male descendant; of his eldest son Shem descending plain, i. e. in Saxon's tongue, geaf, 14.
Geat, get, 212.
Glebe, earth, soil, 9; vital glebe, mortal body, 129.
Goet, Goths, 173.
Gotes, Goths, 140, 162. Goets and Gotes, being used in connection with Danes, probably means Goths; but as they are also used with Galway and Galwedy, they may refer to the Manxmen, who at one time possessed Galloway.
Graffe, graft, shoot, 75.
Guerdon, recompence, deserts, 84.

H.

Had upon, placed upon, 49.
Hallynge, aulæum, hangings, 61; "An hallynge, auleum, anabatrum, *Versus*. Vela vel aulæa cortinæ sunt anabatra." Catholicon anglicanum MS. Dict. inedited, dated 1483.
Hall, usually a large tent for warlike uses, seems to mean the complete set of hangings for a chamber. Thus Margery Argentein in 1427 bequeaths "a steyned hall."—*Rokewode's Suffolk*, p. 290.
Harneys, armour, 9.
Hase, have or hast, 117, &c.
He, for she, 23.
Holly, holily, 95.
Humanyte, courtesy, 25.
Hyght, named, 15, 16.
Historiall, historical, 10, 15, 208.

I.

Iche, each, 112.
Ierarchyses, Hierarchies, 61, 115.
Infortune, misfortune, 194.
Instructe, instructed, 75.
In syght, in presence, 83, 161.
Interiously, internally, 183.
Jutes, people of Jutland, 6.

K.

Kynde, course of Kynde, course of nature, 98, 106, 193.

L.

Lad, one of low condition. Lad to wed a lady is inconvenient, 38.
Layth, probably lightening, akin to laye, or lowe, a flame, 138.

Leed, laid, buried, 19.
Lent, dwelling, abiding, Sax. word, Lenge. to dwell, 98, 119.
Letten, let, permitted, 183.
Lettynge, obstructing, 187.
Leve ye me, believe me, 32, 84.
Lever, rather, preferred, 76.
Lose, destroy, 39.
Lovers, friends, 47.
Lusty eloquence, vigorous, 37.
Lycense, leave, farewell, 65, 78, permission, 6, 36, 43, 99; 136, 152, 158, 186.
Lyghtnesse, nimble, quick, 114.
Lyst, like, desire, 135.
Lyen, plur. of lye, 11.

M.

Machoryte, anchorite, 103.
Maculate, defiled, 104, 126.
Magnifien, magnify, 169, 197, 207.
Maken, make, 134.
Margaryte, pearl, or flower, daisy, 16.
May, maiden, young woman, 27.
Mean, intercession, 172. "Meene, or medyatowre, *mediator.*"—*Prompt. Parv.* "Woman that is meane for any man. advocatte.—*Palsgrave.*
Mede, reward, 13, 17, 18.
Medled, mingled inconveniently, 117.
Memorall, memorable, 8.
Memorative, memorable, 41, 153.
Memorous, memorable, 6, 11, 104, 185.
Mendes, amends, 47.
Mercyable, pitiful, 95, 102, 175.
Minisshe, diminish, 208.
Monyall, recluse, nun. 4, 81, 115, 145, 168, 197, 205; monialis, *Lat.* moniale, *Fr.*
Moynes, nun, 55, 59, 68, 80, 93, 130; moinesse, *old Fr.*
Mutation, taking the contrary course, 190.
Mycle, much, great, 144, 145, 146, 153, 157, 172, 174, &c.
Mynysters, servants, waiters, 64, 94.

N.

Nat, not, 135, &c. &c.
Nay, it is no nay, there is no denying it, 134.
Ne, nor, 54, 83, 100, 102, 117, 148.
Nominate, named, 20, 22, 87, 88, 93, &c. &c.
Nomynyon, nomination, mention, 7.

O.

Observen, plur. of observe, 1.
Odible, odious, 138.
Or, before, 95, 169, 172, 194.
Ordinance, direction, preparation, 62.
Orels, or else, 36, 38, 147, 202.
Out of presence, out of sight, 41.

P.

Parage, parentage, 69.
Paresshen, parishioners, 194.
Passing, surpassing, 23, 27.
Paynyms, pagans, 140, 141.
Paynt, flatter, 2.
Penality, punishment, 174, 198.
Pollers, plunderers, 89.
Pollute, defiled, 129.
Pollynge, pillaging, 139.
Polytyke, sagacious, 20.
Prenominate, forenamed, 139, 190.
Preordinate, predestined, 143.
Preparat, prepared, 1, 62, 114.
Prepotent, very powerful, 14, 76, 182.
Pretended, foreshewed, portended, 28.
Progeny, progenitors, 38.
Prolonging, postponing, 33.
Promission, permission, 129.
Promytte or promyt, promise, 178, 189.
Promyttynge, 163, 166.
Promoters, informers, 89.
Pryce, prize, preeminence, 9.

Pryme, daybreak, 40.
Prymate, supreme governor, 1, 4.
Pudicall, chaste, modest, 142.
Pulchrytude, 30.
Pyght, pitched, set up, 162, 181.
Pyne, sorrow, 213.
Pynne, confine, 98. "Pynnynne, or put yn a pynfold, intrudo, detrudo." *Prompt. parv.* Ang. Sax. pyndan. includere.

R.

Recidivation, relapse, 150.
Recoursed, ran back again, 42.
Redact, 212, from redactus, collected; gathered into the general body.
Refuted, rejected, cast aside, 57.
Regaly, regality, royalty, 16.
Relique, 121, 124, 127, 143, 144, 146, 153, 202.
Remanent, remaining, 152.
Repareled, repaired, 180.
Resembled, reassembled, 119.
Resolution, decay, resolving to original state, 123, 125, 129.
Resolve, dissolve, melt, 54, 129, 130, 142.
Revesshed, revested, clothed again, 127.
Rewarned, rewarded, 84.
Roborate, corroborate, confirm, 91.
Rowme, place, rank, 56.
Rude, uneducated, 127.
Rutilant, glittering, brilliant, 128, 145, 205.
Ryved, rife, frequent, 140.
Rydde, quit, relieved from, 109.

S.

Sad, saad, sayd. Sedate, discrete, 2, 23, 24, 27, 29, 38, 69, 81, 149, 155, 173.
Sadness, discretion, 51, 57, 69.
Sanctymonyal, holy person, 96.
Sapyently, wisely, 37.
Sautynge, assaulting, 163.
Sayne, plur. of say, 14.
Segregate, separated, 159.
Sende for sent, 10, 148, 149, 152, 156, 165, 183, 188, 202.
Sensuals, essentials, 205, 208.
Sequaces, successors, 212.
Sequens, 197. The name of a particular kind of service book. Lat. med. Sequentiarius, sequentialis. "Seqences." were chanted between the lessons at mass.

"Fist mainte sequance et mainte hymne."

Seyn, Sitting, Synod, 90.
Shalmes, musical instrument, 63.
Sothe, truth, 2.
Spyre, spike, tendril, 60. Corn spires when the flowers are forming. "Spyre of corne or herbe, hastula."—*Prompt. Parv.* "Spyre of corne, barbe du ble." —*Palsgrave.*

In the Wickliffe version, Isaiah 35 7. "Grenenesse of rehed and Spier schal growe in dennes in whiche dwelliden dragouns bifor" and Isai. 18. 2. "Papirus is a kynde of spier so great that bokis mowen be maid thereof." In a curious treatise on herbs, &c. Arund. MS. 42. "Pliny says, c. 81. ther is calamus scriptoris, swuche a stable as scryueners writen with, and that is a reed spere; for by olde tyme, ar us of penne were fowndyn men wryten with *reedspyre*, &c. p. 55. 6.

Stable, steady, firm, 27, 32.
Streets, the milky way, 28: In German it is termed "die Milch-strasse" — as Phœbus surpassed other planets or stars, so doth, &c. perhaps, however, the word is a misprint for "starres."
Study, "stode styll in a study," mused in perplexity, was in a brown study, 98.
Sufferaunt, suffering, patient, 92.

Suing, ensuing, following, 61.
Supernall, from above, 41.
Supple her rowme, supply her place, 93.
Supplie, supplicate, 212.
Surges, wax tapers, 144, 154, Fr. cierges, "cereus cereolus, serge." Vocab. Lat. Eng. Roy. MS. ix. c. xvii. "Ceroferarius, a bearer of serge." Harl. MS. 2257.
Sykerness, security, 50.
Syth, since, 4.

T.

Tamysmouth, mouth of Thames, 139.
Thrall, bondage, 99, 113, 115, 117, 193, 207, 212.
—— v. imprisoned, 115, 183.
Tho, those, 25, 58.
Timorous, occasioning alarm, 162.
Tollyng, knocking, pulling, 193.
Tortuous, torturing, 171.
Toynes, tunes, (Prologe of J. T.)
Transcend, pass over, 189.
Translacyon, removal, 124, 128, 146, 159, 185.
Translated, removed, 11, 79, 124, 128, 153, 157, 181. converted, changed, 48, 49, 86, 97.
Trayne, trap, 39, 43.
Trow ye, think ye, 83.
Tuycyon, government, 5, 51. protection, 111, 136, 145.
Tumylate, buried, 26, 108, 126, 158.
Twyn, tine, loss, sorrow, 160.

U.

Uknowinge, unknown, 99.
Unkynde, unnatural, unhealthy, 167.
Unneth, scarcely, 46. Saxon adv.
Ure, use, 64; Ure for use occurs in writers about the age of Bradshaw.
Using him, conducting himself, 87.

V.

Valeaunce, valour, 9.
Varnaunt, verdant, 23, 104, 129.
Venare, Venery, hunting, 8, 149.
Vengeable, revengeful, 39.
Veray, verily, 100.
Virginall, virginlike, 23, 68, 110.
Volupte, voluptuousness, 81.
Vylayne people, of no rank, 36, 38.

W.

Wandeles, Vandals, 140.
Wete, know, 82.
Wis, e wis, I know, 156.
Whome, home, 189, 192, 201.
Whylom, formerly, 3, 4, 20, 21, 117, 136, 147, 209. Idleness whylom, former idleness, 3.
Wodely, madly, 163.
Woo, woe begone, sorrowful, 68.
Wroken, from wreke, revengeful, 39.

Y.

Ycheon, each one, 113.
Yerle, early, 165.
Ylnes, evil, or idleness, 28.
Ympe, graft, scion, 75.
Youre, yore, long ago, 60.

INDEX.

Abbey of S. Werburge founded by Anselme, 183: Richard, a monk of Bec, ordained first Abbot, 183: foundation confirmed by Rufus, 184: endowed with many gifts, 184: fortified, 184: secular priests and canons dismissed, 183, 185: replaced by religious monks, 183, 185: exhortation to become benefactors to, 200.

Abbey gate, fairs to be held there only, 201.

Abraham and his sacrifice depaynted on arras, 60.

Adam and Eve depaynted on arras, 59.

Adda brought by Peada to preach in Mercia, 18.

Adeldryde of Kent, virgin, 15.

Adelhere of East England, 13.

Adelwlf, King of West Saxons, 140.

Adla, King of Southsex, 6.

Adoulfus, King, defeated the Danes, 139.

Agatha, St., in arras, 62.

Agnes, St., in arras, 62.

Albans, St., monastery founded by Offa, 10, 153.

Aldulph, King of East Anglia, great uncle to Werburge, 13, 69: present at marriage of his niece Ermenylde, 25: at feast of Werburge's profession, 59: brother of St. Audry, 59, 73, 74: assists her in building a church of our lady at Ely, 73.

Alfryde, son of Oswy of Northumberland, 17: married Keneburge, 17.

Alfrydus, 5, 138. Alfredus, Alredus, Aluredus, see Alredus, Biog. Dict. born at Beverley in Yorkshire, a secular priest, canon and treasurer of St. John's, Beverley. Wrote a History of Britain from the settlement of Brutus! to the year 1126, in which year he died. Hearne published an edition of his History, at Oxford, 1716, with a preface.

Alle, King of Northumberland, 7.

Alnot, servant to Werburge at Wedon, 101: cruelly treated by her bailiff, 101: who is miraculously punished by a distortion of his head, but afterwards healed, 101, 102: murdered by thieves, buried at Stow besyde Bukbrydge, miracles displayed on his account, 103. Wilson, in the first edition of his English Martyrology, states that a festival in honor of Alnot was observed on the 24th of February, but in his second fixes the 25th of November as the day of solemnity.

Alve, 90, Alvechurch in the diocese of Worcester.

Alured or Alfred, reigned in 875, 153, 154, 155, 159: crowned in London, 147: divided his richesse into 4 partes, poor, religion, scholars, church-building, 147: divided his day into 3 parts,

8 hours to read and pray, 8 to business naturall, i. e. food and sleep, 8 to government, 147 : descriptive quotation from Henry of Huntingdon, 147 : St. Werburge's shrine brought to Chester in his reign, 153.

Ambrose, St., in arras, 62.

Angels, nine orders angelical. Speculative persons in former times divided the angels into nine orders or choirs, but were not always agreed about their precise number or their respective ranks. The titles were Seraphim, Cherubim, Archangels, Angels, Thrones, Principalities, Powers, Dominions, Virtues. These again were divided into three Hierarchies. Represented on arras, 61 : take charge of the soul of St. Werburge, 115 : sung at the birth of King Edgar, 177.

Anlaf, King of Ireland, slain by Ethelstan, 176.

Anna, King of East England, A.D. 639 : ancestor to Werburge, 13 : character, 74 : his descendants, 13, 69, 75 : married Hereswith, 13, 69, 74 : subdued by Penda, 17 : slain in battle, 13, 75 : martyr, 13.

Anselm, 137 : visits Chester, 182 : at the desire of Hugh Lupus, 183 : founds an Abbey there, 1093, in honour of S. Werburge, 183 : expels secular priests and canons, replacing them with religious monks, 137, 183, 185 : ordains Richard, a monk of Bec, in Normandy, to be the Abbot, 183 : returns to London and made Archbishop of Canterbury, 184.

Antoninus, Archbishop, 154. The Archbishop here intended was Athelredus, who held the See from 871 to 889.

Apolyn, St., in arras, 62.

Arras "depaynted with pyctures and hystoryes manyfolde," bought by Wulfer to decorate the Hall at Ely, where he gave a solemn festival upon St. Werburge's Profession, 59 : description of the subjects depaynted, 59 et seq. : subjects peculiarly sacred placed "over the hye desse," 61 : displayed at Chester in honour of Werburge's shrine, 146.

Arthur, King, 150, in arras, 62.

Ashdum, Battle at : Kenwalcus, King of West Saxons defeated there by Wulfer King of Mercia, 20.

Audry, called in some chronicles Edeldritha and Etheldreda, Lady Abbess of Ely, great aunt to Werburge, 13, 56, 65, 69, 79 : receives Werburge with great state, 57 : sister of Aldulph King of East England, 59 : history of, 69 : called Etheldred, 69 : born in Suffolk, at Exmynge, 69 : character and description, 69, 70 : marries Tombert of East England, 71 : living both mayde and wife, 71 : receives Ely as dowry, 71 : retires there as widow, 71 : sued by Egbryct King of Northumberland, 71 : marries him or Egfryde? 71 : lives Queen, wife and maid, 71, 72 : retires to Canwood Abbey, 72 : and there professes, 72 : retires to Ely, 72 : visited miraculously, 72 : elected Abbess, 73 : built a church there, 73 : founds a new monastery 673, 73 : endows the Abbey, 73 : dies 679, 9th Cal. July, i. e. 23rd June, 74, 79 : succeeded by Sexburge, 79 : translated, i. e. her body removed, after 16 years, whole and incorrupt, 79.

Austin, or Augustin, sent to England by Pope Gregory, A. D. 594, 10 : baptized Ethelbryct King of Kent, first Christian king of Saxons, 14, 76, 152 : represented in arras, 62 : founds a monastery at Ely, 73 : returns thanks at Chester in Church of St. Peter and St. Paul, 152 : summons the monks at Bangor to convert the Saxons, 152.

Bangor monastery, 152 : contained nearly 3,000 monks, 152 : summoned by Austin to convert the Saxons, 152 : refuse to obey, 152; many of them slain by King Ethelfride, 152.
Baptism ; of Ethelbryct, 14, 152 : introduced into Mercia, 17 : into East England, 20 : of Wulfade, 42.
Baptismal regeneration, 42, 109.
Bardenay, Lincolnshire, retirement of Ethelred, King of Mercia, 88. Body of St. Oswald removed from thence to Gloucester, 158.
Barkley, 209.
Basilius, St., in arras, 62.
Basyngwerke, 188.
Battle between Penda and Oswy near York, 18.
Battle at Ashdum, 20: Wynwed, 18: Trent, 87.
Bayliffe of Werburge maltreats Alnot her servant, is punished by her with distortion of his head, &c., afterwards healed by her, 101, 102.
Beasts, instruments for mannes salvacyon, 41.
Beccy, brought by Peada to preach in Mercia, 18.
Bede, venerable, 5, 6, 17, 18, 19, 40, 69, 92, 152.
Benedict, St., and his convent, in arras, 62 : his rule adopted by St. Werburge, 73.
Beorswyde, wife of Hereric, King of Deiram, mother of St. Hylda, 12.
Bernulphus, King of Mercia, defeated by the Danes in 851, 140.
Berta of France married to Ethelbryct of Kent, 15.
Berthualdus, Archbishop of Canterbury, 91 : from 692 to 732.
Birth. The three births of man. Nativity, Baptism, Burial, 109.
Bishops' Sees removed from boroughs to "famous towns" by William the Conqueror, 181.
Boniface, Pope, 90, 91. Constantine, a Syrian, was elected to the chair of St. Peter on the 25th day of March, 708, and died April 9th, 715, he took the name of Boniface.
Bricticus, King of West Saxons, 138; at time of Danish invasion, 138.
Britons, expelled to Wales in 689, 6 : by Offa, 10, 152: and confined them there by his Dyke, 10 : first called Welshmen, 159 : their inveterate hate of Saxons 159 : permitted to reside in Chester, till the time of Offa, 152.
Bryges, Bruges, Saint Ethelburge buried there, 13.
Brystowe, *Bristoll*, 7.
Buckbridge, 103 : more properly Bugbrook in the deanery of Daventry, Northamptonshire.
Burdred, King of Mercia, cousin to St. Werburge, 142 : resided at Repton, 141 : reigned 22 years and then expelled by the Danes, 142 : retired to Rome, 142 : buried there, 142.
Caerleon, built by King Belinus, 147 : a Bishop's See to all South Wales, 147 : called Wenedocie, 147 : made an Archbishop's See, 150.
Caeruska a name of Caerleon, 147 : built by Belinus.
Cain and Abel depaynted on arras, 59.
Canterbury. See removed to Lichfield, 10, 153 : oppressed by the Danes, 139.
Canwood Abbey, i. e. Coldingham in Berwickshire, 72 : retirement of St. Audry, 72.
Carlisle founded by King Leil, 148.
Ced or Cedda, brought by Peada to preach in Mercia, 18 : made Bishop of Lichfield on recommendation of Archbishop Theodorus, 21 : and Coventry, 40 : was Archbishop of York during the absence

of Archbishop Wilfride, then lived in retirement, 40 : till at the request of Wulfer, King of Mercia, he was made Bishop of Lichfield in 669, he died, 672, protects a hunted deer, 40 : miraculously converts Wulfade and Ruffyn to Christianity and baptises them, 41, 42, : performs a miracle, hangs his vestures on a sunbeam, 48, 49 : reconverts Wulfer to Christianity, 48.

Cerdicus, first King of West Saxons, A.D. 521, 6.

Charitas, St., in arras, 62.

Charlemagne in alliance with Offa, 153.

Chaucer, 209.

Cheshire, west part of Mercia, praised for valour, 9.

Chester, Werburge's body received there, 136 : second foundation of monastery, i. e. secular canons replaced by monks, by Hugh Lupus 137. Shrine of St. Werburge conveyed thither by the Convent of Hambury to escape from the pollution of the Danes, 143 : received, A. D. 875, with great pomp and ceremony and song of welcome, 144 : converted to Christianity at desire of Lucius, A.D. 156, and two doctors sent by Pope Elentherius for that purpose, 149. Daily sacrament administered at Church of St. Peter and Paul for three hundred years, 151.

Chester : Abbey, p. 4, 131 : extent of, 137 : City, 7, 131, 136 : Bishopric, 21. St. John's Church built by Ethelred King of Mercia, A.D. 689, 86. Shrine of St. Werburge brought to Chester, 131, 136, 143, 153. Abbey church founded, 131. Minster founded, 131, 156 : re-edified by Leofric, 137, 180 : transferred from secular canons to monks, 137 : miracles performed there, 136. Chester miraculously saved from the Welsh, 131, 160 : from fire, 137, 196 : plague, 137 : reception of her shrine, 144 : called Caerleon, 148 : or City of legions, 149, 178 : said to be founded by Lleon Gaur, 148 : or rather by King Leil, 148 : by the Romans, 148 : fortified by Marius, 148 : called city of the legions, now Cestria from Castria, 149 : the Capital and See of North Wales, 149. Character and description, 149 : commended for its early faith, 150. First church founded in second century dedicated to St. Peter and Paul, 151 : mother church of the city, 151, 153 : was the cemetery for the city and seven miles round, 151. The true faith remained at Chester as the faith of Peter never failed at Rome, 151. Britons permitted to reside in Chester till expelled by Offa, 152. Several churches built in the city, 153. St. Peter and Paul's church enlarged by Elflede, daughter of Alfred, 155 : and made a Minster, 155, 156 : Edmund, her nephew, recorded as founder in St. John's church, 156. Secular canons and prebends established at the Minster, 156. Chester re-edified and fortified, A. D. 908, by Elflede, 157 : Walls enlarged, having been injured by Ethelfrede, King of Northumberland and by the Danes, 157. Castle enclosed, 158 : besieged by Griffinus, King of Britons, 159, 160 : saved by Werburge's shrine, 160 : attacked by Danes and Scots, and again saved by the shrine, 163 : flourished till the coming of the Normans, 180. St. John's church repaired by Earl Leofric, 180 : Minster re-edified and endowed by the same, 180. Bishopric removed from Lichfield to Chester, 181. Great fire, A. D. 1184, (194) : quenched by shrine of St. Werburge, 196.

Chester, a city of Mercia, 7.

Christianity preached in Mercia, 18, 43 :

in Britain, 149, 150: remained pure at Chester, 151.
Church. St. John's Chester, curious record there, 156: built by Ethelred King of Mercia, 689, 86: repaired by Leofric Earl of Chester, 180. St. Peter and St. Paul's, Chester, founded, 151: the cemetery of the city and seven miles round, 151: the mother church, 151, 153: St. Werburge's shrine placed there, 153: great offerings made there, 154: enlarged into a minster by Elflede, daughter of Alfred, 155, 156: her nephew Edmund recorded in St. John's church as the founder, 156. A new church "in the myddes of the cite," built instead to the honour of these apostles, 157.
Church, interference in electing a king, 85.
Claudius, Emp., sends troops to Chester, 148.
Cochede, misprint for Coelred, cousin of Werburge translated the body of Werburge from her tomb to a shrine, 11, 124, 125, 128. Colrede or Coelred, 87: succeeds his cousin Kenred as King of Mercia, 92.
Colbrond, the giant Dane, killed by Guy, Earl of Warwick, 176.
Colchester, chief city of Essex, 7.
College. Pontifical Court, 90.
Constable's Sands, where the Constable William miraculously passed through the Dee, on the dry sands from Hillbre Island to Wales, 189.
Corpwaldus, of East England, 13.
Coventry. Abbey founded by Leofric, 180: freedom of the city obtained by his lady Godith, 180.
Council, general, held by Kenred King of Mercia, 90: description, 91: at London, 181.
Cryda, first King of Mercia, 7: father to Wybba and Quadriburge, 11, 12: ancestor of Werburge, 11.
Cup. "Some to sit between the cup and the wall," 2.
Cycyly, St., in arras, 62.
Danes, invasion by, 128, 131, 136, 138, A. D. 851, with 300 ships, 140: prognosticated by marvellous signs A. D. 786, 138: permitted as punishment for sin, 139, 140: spoil Holy Island, 139: Tynmouth, 139: persecuted England 230 years, from Adelwlf, King of West Saxons, till the coming of the Normans, 140: arrive in the Thames A. D. 851, 140: also in 866 destroy Trentham and Wedon, 142: oppress Kent, 142: Isle of Wight, 142: West marches, 142: injure Chester, 157: defeated seven times by Edward the elder, 155: thrice defeated by Athelstan, 176: slay St. Edmund, King of East England, 141: burn monasteries, churches, &c. 141.
David pourtrayed in arras, 61.
Dee river, divides England and Wales, 7, 160: waters divided for the Cheshire troops to pass through, 189.
Deer, a wild, miraculously obedient to St. Cead, 42.
Deiram, south part of Northumberland, between the Humber and Tweed, 12.
Doctors, four, 135. St. Athanasius, St. Basil, St. Gregory Nazianzen and St. Chrysostom.
Domveve, wife of Marwalde of Mercia, 17:
Dorchester, Bishopric, 21.
Dove, and flaming star appear with shrine of St. Werburge to put out a fire at Chester, 196. Dove miraculously breaks a rope and saves a man from hanging, 170: cures a broken leg, 174.
Dover destroyed by the Danes in 851, 140.
Dragons flying in the air forebode the Danish invasion, 786, 138.

Dress, exhortation against vanity and expence of, 66.
Dunstan hears angels sing at the birth of King Edgar, 177.
Duyna, brought by Peada to preach in Mercia, 18: he was consecrated Bishop of Lichfield, upon its erection into a See, 656: and died, 659.
Eadbald, King of Kent, 15, 22, 76: marries Emma of France, ancestor of Werburge, 15.
Eadburg of Kent, Saint, daughter to Ethelbryct, first christian king, 15.
Eadfryde, son of Edwyn, King of Northumberland, 12: ancestor to Werburge, 12.
Eagida thrice cured of lameness by St. Werburge, 161.
East England, fifth kingdom of Heptarchy, Offa first king, 7: account of its princes, 13: Isle of Wight annexed to it by Wulfer King of Mercia on condition of the king's baptism, 20.
East Sea. East of Mercia, 8.
Ebba, Saint, Abbess of Canwood, 72.
Edelfled, daughter of Oswy, King of Northumberland, offered to "God omnypotent," 19: sent to St. Hylda at Whitby for instruction, 19.
Edgar, crowned at Kyngston aged 16, 176: named meek, 176: angels heard to sing at his birth, 177: happiness of his reign, 177: character, 177: builds forty religious places, 177: expels secular priests from monasteries, 177: establishes a fleet, 177: annual progress through the land, 177: visits Chester, 137, 178: rowed on the Dee by eight kings, 178: visits shrine of St. Werburge, 179: compared to Romulus, Cyrus, Charlemagne and Hector, 179. The Latin eulogy is taken from Henry of Huntingdon.
Edisbury, built by Elfiede, daughter of Alfred, 158.
Edmund, King of East England, slain by the Danes in 866, 141.
Edmund, sole monarch, reigned five years, 176.
Edred, sole monarch, 176.
Edward the elder, 131, 137, 155, 159, 175: crowned A. D. 901, defeated the Danes seven times, 155: gives Mercia to Ethelred (or Ethelbert) his brother-in-law, 155.
Edward, confessour, 179.
Edwyne, King of Northumberland, 15, 74: marries Ethelburg of Kent, 15.
Edwyn, sole monarch, 176.
Edwyn, King of Northumberland, marries Quadriburge of Mercia, ancestors to Werburge, 12: subdued by Penda, 16.
Egbryct of Kent, 16, 76: reigned ten years, 16: uncle to Werburge called by mistake uncle to Emenylde his sister, 25: at feast of Werburge's profession, 59.
Egbryct of Northumberland, 71: sues St. Audry, 71: marries her? 71. Egbryct is probably a mistake of the author or printed for Egfryde, who according to the chronicles was second husband to St. Audry, who is called Etheldritha and Etheldreda.
Egfryde of Northumberland marries St. Audry, 71: invades Mercia, 87: subdued by Ethelred of Mercia, 87.
Egnicius of East England, martyr, 13, 74: subdued by Penda, 17.
Egwyn, Bishop of Worcester, 86, 89: persuades Ethelred to build Evesham Monastery, 86. Legend of Egwyn, 89: visits Rome, 90.
Egypt, plagues of, embost in arras, 60.
Elentherius, Pope, A. D. 156, sends two doctors to christianize Britain, 149.
Elfiede, daughter of Oswy, King of Northumberland, wife of Peada, King of Mercia, whom she murders, 19.
Elfiede, daughter of Alfred, wife of Ethelred,

155. enlarges St. Peter's and Paul's, Chester, 156: converts it into a minster, and fixes there secular canons and prebends, 156: dedicates an oratory to the Trinity and St. Oswald, 157: re-edifies and fortifies Chester, A.D., 908, 157: enlarges the walls, 157: encloses the Castle, 158; rules Mercia after the death of her husband, 158: repairs, Stafford, Warwick, Thornwort, and Shrewsbury, 158: builds Runcorn and Edisbury, 158: translates St. Oswald from Bardeney to Gloucester, 158; builds St. Peters at Gloucester, and is buried there, A. D. 919, 158. Epitaph from Henry of Huntingdon, 158.

Elijah, fed by ravens, 41.

Ella, King of Southsex, 6.

Ely. 13. Monastery, 51: selected for residence by St. Werburge, 51: her reception there by St. Audry the Abbess 57: given by Tombert as dower to St. Audry, 71: with muddy waters compased aboute, 71. Church there built by St. Audry, 73. Monastery founded by St. Austin, 73: new monastery founded by St. Audry, 673, 73. St. Audry, Abbess, 73. Sexburge, her sister, retires to Ely and afterwards is elected Abbess, 79, 80. Ermynylde retires to Ely and succeeds her mother Sexburge as Abbess, 81: miracles performed there, 82, 83.

Enswyde of Kent, saint, great uncle to Werburge, 15.

Emma of France, wife of Eadbald, King of Kent, 15.

Erchenwyn, first King of Essex, oft brought to ruin by King of Mercia, 6, 7.

Ercombert, King of Kent, grandfather of St. Werburge, 16, 22: marries Sexburge of East England, 12, 13, 15, 76: character, 15: commands Lent to be observed, 16, 77: promotes religion, 77: dies, having reigned 24 years, 78, or 30 years, 16.

Ergar, for Edgar, visits Chester, 137.

Erkengode of Kent, aunt of St. Werburge, a nun, 16, 76: professes at Bruges, 77.

Ermenberge of Kent, virgin, spouse of Jesus, 15.

Ermenburge of Kent, virgin, spouse of Jesus, sister of preceding, 15.

Ermengyde of Kent, 15.

Ermenred of Kent, great uncle to Werburge, married to Ossava, 15.

Ermenricus, King of Kent, reigned in 535, great grandson of Hengist, 14: father of Ethelbryct first christian King, 14.

Ermenylde, wife of Wulfer, King of Mercia, 11, 12: mother of St. Werburge, 12, 13, 16, 35, 76: marriage, 16, 22, 24: character, 23, 24, 25, 33, 76, 80, marriage solemnity, 24: pedigree, 22: severely reprimands Werbode for seeking Werburge in marriage. 35, 36, &c. after the death of Wulfer retires to Ely monastery, 80: succeeds her mother Sexburge as Abbess of Ely, 81: dies, Idus, (i. e. 13) feb. 82; buried at Ely, 82: and enshrined, 82: miracle performed at her tomb, 82, 84.

Essentials of Religion, three; wilful poverty, chastity, obedience, 65, 88, 96, 108. 139, 185, 205.

Essex, fourth kingdom of the heptarchy; first King, Erchenwyn, 6: oft brought to ruin by King of Mercia, 7: chief city, Colchester, 7.

Ethelbryct of Kent, 76: reigned in 555, 14: baptized by Austin, 14, 76, 152: first christian King, 14, 22, 76: founder of many religious establishments, 14, 76: married Berta of France, 15.

Ethelbryct of Kent, great grandson of the preceding, martyr, 15.

Ethelburge of East England, 13, 69, 77;

great aunt to Werburge: buried at Bryges, 13. Abbess of Bruges, 77.
Ethelburg of Kent, Saint, wife of Edwyne King of Northumberland, 15.
Etheldrede of Kent, martyr, 15.
Ethelfride, King of Northumberland, slays disobedient monks at Bangor, 152: ruins Chester, 157.
Ethelrede, 155: husband of Elflede the daughter of Alfred, receives Mercia from his brother-in-law Edward, 155.
Ethelred, son of Penda, 11, 17, 74: uncle to Werburge, 17: marries Ostryde daughter of Oswy King of Northumberland, 87: present at feast of Werburge's profession, 58: succeeds Wulfer, 79, 85: as Regent, elect of his peeres, permytted by his church, 85: converted by Werburge, 85: made her president of all monasteries, 85, 122: gave her lands, &c. for church building, 86: builds St. John's church, Chester, 689, 86: gave ground for building Evesham monastery, 86: oppresses Kent, 87; subdues Egfryde of Northumberland, 87: after the death of his wife Ostryde, having reigned twenty-nine years, he resigned his crown by the counsell of St. Werburge, 87: and retired to Bardenay and became Monk, 88: afterwards made Abbot, 88.
Ethelstan, son of Edward the elder, 137: crowned at London, 175. In the fourth year of his reign, A.D. 872, Guy of Warwick kills Colbrond, 176. He thrice defeats the Danes, 176: slays Anlaf King of Ireland, 176: character, 176. A Latin eulogy taken from William of Malmsbury, 176.
Ethelwod of East England, 13.
Eusam, *see* Evesham.
Evesham monastery built on ground given by Ethelred King of Mercia, 87: endowed with eighty-four tenements by Kenred King of Mercia, 89: obedient to the Pope alone, 90, 91: a Council formally confirms this dedication, 91: repaired by Leofric earl of Chester, 180.
Eustace, St. converted by a Hart, 41: his festival was kept on the 20th day of September.
Exmynge in Suffolk, birth place of St. Audry, 69.
Festival on Werburge's profession described, 59: the company, 58, 59. arras described, 59, 60, 61. conversation, 63. music, 63. minstrells, 63.
Fair of St. Werburge, Chester, merchandise to be sold only before the Abbey-gate, 201.
Finanus, Bishop, baptizes King Wulfer, 20, 33: preaches Christianity in England, 43.
Fledde, King of Essex and Middlesex, married Ricula sister to Ethelbryct first christian King, 14.
Funereal ceremonies, 116.
Gauntes, 97, 98. This name is usually given to Pelecanus Bassanus, Soland Geese, Gannet, but in early authors seems to be applied generally to any description of wild goose. Gantæ, anseres sylvestres, Ducange. It is somewhat remarkable that St. Milburge is pourtrayed holding a church in her hand and chasing geese.
Geaf, 14.
Geese, wild, miraculously impounded by St. Werburge, 97: one, roasted and eaten, restored to life, 100.
Giraldus, a Briton. Giraldus Cambrensis, 86.
Gloucester. Body of St. Oswald removed from Bardenay to St. Peter's at Gloucester, 158. Elflede daughter of Alfred buried there in 919, 158.

Godfather. Wulfer, godfather to King of East England, 21. St. Cead, priest and godfather to Prince Wulfade "for want of companye," 42.

Godith, or Godiva, wife of Leofric, Earl of Chester, 180: obtains freedom of Coventry, 180.

Goet, 173. Danes from Gothland or Jutland.

Gregory, the great doctor, in arras, 62.

Gregory, Saint, sends St. Austyn to England, A.D. 594, 10.

Gregory, Pope, sends Augustin to England, 594, 10.

Griffinus, King of the Britons, 159: besieges Chester, 159, 160. One of his soldiers smote with a stone the shrine of St. Werburge which was placed upon the walls for the defence of the city, he immediately expired with hideous pain, 160. Griffinus and his host were smitten with blindness and depart from before the city, 160.

Gyrarde, 5. Q. Giraldus Cambrensis?

Guy, Earl of Warwick slays Colbrond the giant Dane, A.D. 872, in the fourth year of the reign of Ethelstan, 176.

Hambury situated in the northern division of Offlow in the county of Stafford. Monastery built and endowed by Werburge, 86: her residence, 159: under her rule, 122: burial place of Werburge, 107, 120, 123, 131: the recluses ordered to attend at her death and take charge of her body, 107. They remove the body from Trentham, where she died, during a miraculous stupor inflicted on the residents there, 119. The tomb there, 127. The shrine of Werburge removed thence to Chester to escape the Danes, 131, 142. Miracles performed there, 159.

Harold, King of Danes, 162: besieges Chester, 163: repelled by the Shrine of St. Werburge, 163.

Harold defeated by William the Conqueror, 181.

Hector death of, in arras, 62.

Hedda or Headda, Bishop of Lichfield at the time of the translation of Werburge's body, 22 July, 708, 128.

Hengist, fourth in descent from Woden, 14: accompanied by Saxons, Angles and Jutes, i. e. people of Jutland, came to England, A. D. 449, to the assistance and at the invitation of Vortiger, 6: became first King of Kent, 6, 14.

Heptarchy, 6.

Hereric, King of Deiram, marries Beorswyde, father to St. Hylda and Heryswith, 12, 74.

Hereswyth, daughter of Hereric, King of Deiram, 12: wife of Anna, King of East England, 13, 74: mother of Sexburge, St. Audry, St. Ethelburge, St. Withburge, St. Jurwyne and King Aldulph, 13.

Hezechiah, pourtrayed in arras, 61.

Heirarchies, and the three, 61, 115, *see* Angels.

Helburghee, Island, 188. William Constable of Chester by help of Werburge passes his army dryshod from thence to Wales to rescue Richard Earl of Chester from the Welsh, 189.

Hingwur, a northern King invades England in 866, 141.

Holy Island, spoiled by the Danes, 139.

Hoo, a village in Kent: miracles performed there, 104: an oak-tree opens and receives Werburge to protect her from violence, and remains to this day vernaunt, fresh, green and clere, and a test of purity, 104. Hoo a parish in the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of the dio-

cese and deanery of Rochester is distinguished from others by the name of Hoo St. Werburgh, as the church was dedicated to that saint. Laurence, Bishop of Rochester, appopriated this church, with the chapel of All Saints, to the prior and convent of Rochester.

Hoole heth, 162. Harold the Dane and Malcolm of Scotland draw up their army there against Chester, 162.

Hubba, a northern King invades England in 866, 141.

Hugh Lupus, nephew to the Conqueror, 181, 190: receives Cheshire from him, 182: to hold by the sword, and call parliaments, 182. Conquers Cheshire after three defeats, 182: government of his Earldom, 182: invites Anselm to visit Chester and found an Abbey there, 1093, 183: endows it with many gifts, books, &c. 184, 185: forms a cemetery in it and protects the whole with strong walls, 184: dies 27 July, A.D. 1102, 185: succeeded in the Earldom by his son Richard, 185.

Humber, North of Mercia, 8: with the Mersey divides Mercia from Northumberland, 8.

Humility, twelve degrees of, 96, 113.

Hylda, Abbess and foundress of the Abbey of Whitby, 12, 74: daughter of Hereric of Northumberland and Beorswyde, 12.

Joshua leading the Israelites in pycture on arras, 60.

Ida, King of Northumberland, 7.

Idolatry, destroyed, 20, 25, 33, 49.

Jerom, St. in arras, 62.

Jerumannus, Bishop of Lichfield, 21: baptizes Wulfer, 20. He was made Bishop of Lichfield, 664: and died 669: first bishop of East England, 43: preaches Christianity in England, 43.

Joseph, History of, depaynted on arras, 60.

Judith, a lady cured of barrenness, 164.

Julius Cæsar, sends troops to Chester, to subdue Ireland, 148.

Jurwyne of East England, great uncle to Werburge, martyr, 13, 69.

Jutes, Danes from Jutland, 14.

Katherine, St. in arras, 62.

Keneburge, daughter of Penda, 11, 17: Aunt to Werburge, 17: buried at Peterborough, enshrined, 11: married Alfryde of Northumberland, 17: at feast of Werburge's profession, 58.

Kenneswyde, virgin, daughter of Penda, 11, 17. aunt to Werburge, 17: buried and enshrined at Peterborough, 11: at feast of Werburge's professoin, 58.

Kenrede, brother of Werburge, 12, 26, 85: confessor, 26: buried at Rome, 26: King of Mercia, 88, 89: character of him, and his engagements, 89: endows Evesham with eighty-four tenements, 89: visits Rome, 90: calls a general council to confirm the obedience of Evesham to the Popedom, 90: resigns his crown to his nephew Coelrede, 92: revisits Rome, A.D. 708: becomes Monk, professes the order of St. Benedict, 92: dies 92.

Kent, Kingdom of, earliest of the heptarchy, their first King, Hengist, A.D. 455, 6: account of, 14: united to Mercia by Wulfer, 25: oppressed by Ethelred of Mercia, 87: oppressed by the Danes, 142.

Kenuherus of East England, a noble man of fame, 13.

Kenwalcus, King of West Saxons, defeated by Wulfer, at Ashdum, 20.

Kingston, Edgar crowned at, 176.

Kyneswith, wife of Penda, King of Mercia, grandmother to Werburge, 11, 17.

Ladies, exhortation to, 66.

Laurence, St. in arras, 61.

Leeds, Battle near, 19, 33.

Legend. The true legende, 5, 24, 27, 97, 101, of Egwyn, 89.
Legendary, The sweet, read by Werburge, 96.
Legions, two cities of, Caerleon in Monmouthshire, 147, and Chester, 148.
Leil, King, founder of Chester, 148, and Carlisle, 148.
Lent ordered to be observed, 16.
Leofric, Earl of Chester, 179: repairs and endows the Minster at Chester, 137, 180: and several churches, 180: founded Leonence monastery, 180: and Wenlecence, 180: repaired Evesham, 180: founded Abbey at Coventry, 180: made the city free, 180: repaired college of St. Johns, Chester, 180.
Leofwin, Duke of Mercia, father of Leofric, 179.
Leonence, monastery founded by Leofric, Earl of Chester, 180.
Lichfield. See of Canterbury removed to, 10, 153. Bishopric, 21: removed to Chester, 1075. 181.
Lillies, used as crowns for Virgins, 62.
Lincoln. Bishopric, 21: attacked by the Danes, 141.
Literature, Prologe to the second book, a poem in praise of, 134.
Lleon gauer, reputed founder of Chester, 148: a giant, builder of caves and dungeons but no goodly buyldyng propre ne pleasaunt, 148.
London, 8: oppressed by the Danes, 139, 141: made an Archbishop's See 150.
Lothary of Kent, 16, 74, 76: reigned twelve years, 16: called erroneously uncle to his sister Ermenylde, 25.
Lucius, King of Britain, A.D. 156, 149: introduces Christianity into Britain, 149: "ordeyned" 28 Bishops and 3 Archbishops, at London, York, and Caerleon in South Wales, 150.
Lucy, St. in arras, 62.
Lupus, Hugh, 137: transfers the monastery at Chester from secular canons to Monks, 137.
Lydgate, 209.
Lyndesy, monastery for fifty Monks by Wulfer, 21.
Maccabees, Story of, in arras, 61.
Marceyl, or Mersellyn, son of Penda, 11, 17: uncle to Werburge, 17: at feast of Werburge's profession, 58.
Margaryte, 16. Qu. name or quality? Saint, in arras, 62.
Marius, King of the West partie, fortified Chester, 148: slewe Reodric, King of the Picts, 148: and calls his territory Westmarilande after his own name, 148.
Marriage commended and enjoined upon Werburge by her father Wulfer, 51.
Martin, St. in arras, 62.
Marwalde, or Merwalde, son of Penda, 11, 17: uncle to Werburge, 17: married Ermenberge princess of Kent, 11: or Domvere, 17: father of three holy virgins, Myldred, Mylburge, Mylgyde, at feast of Werberge's profession, 58.
Matilda, niece to King Henry I. Countess of Chester, 190: wife of Earl Richard, son of Hugh Lupus, 190: compared to Jezabel, and Athaliah, 190: incenses her husband against the monastery of St. Werburge, for refusing to give him the Manor of Sallon, 191. For this iniquity she and her husband were shipwrecked and drowned, at the same time with William, son of Henry I. 193.
Matrimony commended, 52.
Maucolyn, King of Scotland, 162: besieges Chester, 163: repelled by the Shrine of St. Werburge, 163.
Mercia, 5. Mercyens, 5. History of, 5, 11. Sixth kingdom of Heptarchy, Cryda first King, 7: continued 300 years, under *eighteen* Kings, 7: des-

cription of, 7: derives its name from Mersey River, 8: enlarged by Penda, 8. Cities and towns of, 8. Productions of, 8, Valour of the people, especially of the west part, 9: introduction of Christianity, 17, 18: rebels against Oswy, King of Northumberland, 19: crowns Wulfer, 19: divided originally into three parts, 20: united under Wulfer, 20: largest province in England, 21: account of, 21: contains five bishoprics, 21: united to Kent by Wulfer, 25: invaded by the Danes, 141: given to Ethelrede by Edward the elder, 155: after his death governed by his widow Elflede, 158.

Mereum, cousin to Werburge, died in baptism, "taken by myracle expresse to the blys of heven," 11.

Mersey River, North of Mercia, 8: with the Humber, divides Mercia from Northumberland, 8: the name of Mercia derived from it, 8: flows between Cheshire and Lancashire, 8,

Minstrels engaged at high Festivals, 63.

Minster at Chester, originally a Church dedicated to St. Peter and St. Paul, receives the shrine of St. Werburge, enriched with great offerings and then enlarged and converted into a minster, a new church being built instead in the midst of the city and dedicated to the two above named Saints, 156, 157: re-edified and endowed by Earl Leofric, 180.

Miracles. A Hart obedient to S. Cead, 42; a glorious light conceals the mass from Wulfer, 48. St. Cead hangs his vesture on a sunbeam, 48, 49: performed at Stone, 50. By St. Werburge's sanctity, 68: by St. Audry's 72. Angel appears to St. Sexburge, 78: body of St. Audry found incorrupt after 16 years, 79: at tomb of Ermenylde irons fall from a prisoner and spring up on the altar, 83. Schoolmaster punished and relieved, 84: shewed towards Werburge, 85: of Werburge, 96, 97. Wild geese pounded at Wedon, 97: a roasted and eaten goose restored to life, 100: the head of her bailiff distorted by her and restored, 101, 102. Her veil hanged on a sunbeam, 103: miraculous oak at Hoo, 104. Werburge cures all manner of diseases, 105: miraculous powers after death prayed for by Werburge, 113. Angels take charge of her, 115: sweet odours rise from her body, 116: miraculous sleep of the watchers of St. Werburge's body at Trentham, 119. Locks and barres of Trentham Abbey fall down without mans hands, 119. at tomb of Werburge, 120, 121, 153, 159. Werburge after 200 years voluntarily resolves her body to dust, 129. at Chester, 137: of Werburge, next to those of the Virgin Mary, 143. performed at Wedon, 159. Hambury, 159: first miracle shewed for Werburge after her translation to Chester, 159. Chester saved by her shrine, 160. Soldier struck it with a stone and is struck dead, 160. British army struck blind, 160: compelled to return from siege of Chester, 160: at another time a soldier for similar offence becomes mad and dies, and the enemy retires, 162. Lady cured of barrenness, 164. Pregnant woman cured of insanity, 166. Woman cured of blindness, 167: six halt, lame and blind and many others cured, 168. A man hanged, twice restored to life, 170. Corn preserved at Upton from horses, 172. Broken leg cured, 173. Dee divided as the Red Sea, 189. Eagida thrice cured of lameness, 161. St. Werburge, and an honest woman, appear at the monastery of

Chester to announce the death of Earl Richard, 193. Fire at Chester put out by shrine of St. Werburge, 196: of St. Werburge recapitulated, 197.
Monasteries and Religious houses founded, 10, 15, 49, 50, 77. Peterborough Abbey founded, 49. Stone Priory, 50. Ely, 73. Trentham, Hambury and Wedon, 86. Evesham, 87. St. Albans, 10.
Moses and busche flammynge depaynted on arras, 60: also receiving the two tables on Mount Synaye, 60.
Music invented by Tuball and Tubalcain, 59.
Mylburge, virgin, cousin to Werburge, 11.
Myldred, virgin, cousin to Werburge, 11.
Mylgyde, virgin, cousin to Werburge, 11.
Nicholas, St. in arras, 62.
Noah, comforted by a dove, 41: and his shyppe depaynted on arras, 59.
Norfolk, subject to Offa, 7.
Northumberland, 7th Kingdom of Heptarchy under Ida and Alle, previously two kingdoms, chief city York, 7. Account of its princes, 12.
Norton Abbey, founded by William, Constable of Chester, in memory of his miraculous passage dryshod from Hilbree Island to Wales, 189.
Oak at Hoo, 104: preserves St. Werburge, a test of perfyte lyfe, 104.
Oblacions required for restoration to health, 121, 124.
Offa, first King of *East Anglia.* Norfolk and Suffolk, 7: subdued the West Saxons, Northumberland and Kent, 9: drove the Britons into Wales and made the Dyke, named after him, to restrain them, 10: removed the See of Canterbury to Lichfield, 10, 153, founded St. Alban's monastery, 10, 153: gave Peter's Pence to Rome, 10, 153: visits Rome, 90: expels Brutes and Welshmen out of Chester, 152: gains 17 battles against the Pagans, 153: alliance with Charlemagne, 153: first took the whole monarchy, 153: reigned 39 years, 153.
Offryde, son of Edwyn, King of Northumberland, 12, 74: slain in battle, 12: husband of St. Audry? 74: Offryde is probably a mistake for Egfryde.
Ossava, wife of Ermenred of Kent, 15.
Ostryde, daughter of Oswy King of Northumberland, wife of Ethelred, King of Mercia. 87: murdered 87: by the people of the north parte, or, by her own people, that is, by the nobility of Mercia, A.D. 697, *vide* Bede B. v. ch. 42.
Oswald, King of Northumberland, martyr, 16: subdued by Penda, 16: and slain, 18 Oratorie at Chester, i. e. south transept of the cathedral, dedicated to him by Elflede, daughter of Alfred, 157: she translates his body from Bardenay to Gloucester, and builds over it a church dedicated to St. Peter, 158. She founded the priory of St. Oswald, introducing into it secular priests; it was accounted a free chapel royal, exempt from the jurisdiction of the Archbishop of Canterbury or Bishop of Worcester.
Oswolde, Saint, 72: brother of Ebba Abbess of Canwood, 72.
Oswy, King of Northumberland, 17, 87: invaded by Penda, 18: offers him presents to avoid war, 18: defeats Penda who is slain, 19, 33: offers his daughter Edelfled "to god omnypotent," 19: sends her for instruction to St. Hylda at Whitby, and gives 12 possessions to build a monastery there, 19: rebelled against by the Mercians, 19.
Pagans, viz. Danes, Goths, Norwegians,

Scots, Picts, Vandals, 140, 141: invade England in 851, with 300 shippes, 140: again in 866, 141.

Passyonary. A boke wherein her holy lyfe wryten is, whiche boke remayneth in Chester monastery, 26: The third Passionary, 120, 197.

Peada, son of Penda, 11, 17: introduced baptism into Mercia, 17: married Elflede, daughter of Oswy, King of Northumberland, 17: brought four priests, Ced, Beccy, Adda and Duyna to preach in Mercia, 18: reigned three years, 19: murdered by his Queen Elflede, 19.

Peers, elect a King, or Regent, 85.

Penda, King of Mercia, 8: enlarged it, 8, 17: subdued five kings, 11, 16: Edwyn and Oswald of Northumberland, Sygebert, Egnicius and Anna of East England, 16: married Keneswith, 11, 17: was grandfather to Werburge, 11: history, 16: begun to reign, A.D. 626 aged 50, 16: tenth in descent from Woden, 16: reigned 30 years, 11, 16: permitted introduction of baptism, 17, 18: and the preaching of Christianity, 18: invades Oswy King of Northumberland, 18: slays St. Oswalde, 18: and Anna, 75: slain in battle near York with 30 dukes, 19, 33.

Peter, Bishop of Lichfield, consecrated 1067, removed his See to Chester, 1075, 181: died 1086: buried at Chester.

Peterborough Abbey. Saints Keneburge and Keneswyde buried there, 11: founded by Wulfer, in satisfaction for the death of his sons Wulfade and Ruffyn, 49.

Peter's Pence first paid to Rome by Offa, 10, 153.

Polycronycon, 5, 7, 128, 148, 179, by Ralph Higden, 128. This is an early chronicle consisting of seven books, comprising a history from the creation to the year 1357. The six first books were compiled by Ralph Higden, with great judgement, and are more relied upon as an authority than most works treating of times so long anterior to those of the author. The seventh book is entirely original and may be consulted with safety. The folio edition of 1642 is generally considered the best.

Portents of Danish Invasion, 138.

Profession of St. Werburge, 65.

Proverbs. Please God and love him and doubt ye nothing, 96. Man proposeth and God disposeth, 119. Good maners and conynge maken a man, 134.

Purgatory, Werburge exempt from, 115.

Quadriburge, daughter of Cryda, 11. Wife of Edwyn, King of Northumberland, ancestress to Werburge, 12.

Ranulphus or Radulphus Higden, author of the Polychronicon, 128, 148. He was an early and faithfnl chronicler, he died in 1363.

Redwald, of East England, a chrysten prince, 13.

Regeneration by Baptism, 42.

Reliques of St. Werburge, 143, 146: efficacious, 121.

Repton monastery under the rule of St. Werburge, 122: attacked by the Danes, 141, 142. Burdred, King of Mercia residing there, 141.

Richard a Monk of Bec in Normandy, first Abbot of St. Werburghe Abbey, 183.

Richard, 2d Earl of Chester, 137. Son of Hugh Lupus, 185, 187, 190: miraculously preserved from Welshmen, 137. 187: drowned, 137: pilgrimage to St. Winifrede, 187: waylaid by the Welsh, 188: resscued by his constable

William and brought safe to Chester, 189 : married Matilda, niece of Henry I. 190 : succeeds to the earldom at seven years of age, 190 : benefactor to religious establishments, 190 : perverted by his wife, asks for the manor of Salton from St. Werburge's Abbey, 191 : enraged at the Abbot's refusal, meditates the destruction of the Abbey, 192. Shipwrecked and drowned off Barfleur for evil intentions against the Abbey, 193, 203. His death announced to the Sacristan by a vision of St. Werburge, 193 : and by a woman to the Abbot and convent by command of St. Werburge, 193.

Ricula of Kent, sister to Ethelbryct, first Christian king, married to Fledde, King of Essex and Middlesex, 14.

Roboas, wrought in arras, 61.

Roman History, or Lays of Rome sung by minstrels, 63.

Roses, emblems of spiritual victories, 62.

Ruffyn, brother of Werburge, 12, 26, 35, 37 : reproves Werbode for seeking Werburge in marriage, 38 : hunts a hart to St. Cead's Well, 42 : converted by St. Cead, 42 : baptized 42 : betrayed and slandered by Werbode, 44, 45 : slain, as a convert to Christianity by his father Wulfer, 46.

Runcorn, built by Elflede, daughter of Alfred, 158.

Sabryne, Sabrina, Severn River, 7.

St. John, *v.* Churches.

St. Peter and St. Paul, *v.* Churches.

Saints represented in arras, 61, 62.

Salisbury, a principal city of the West Saxons, 6.

Sampson subduing his enemies, in arras, 62.

Saul, worked in arras, 61.

Saxons, infect all Britain with apostacy, 151. Their first realm was Kent, A.D. 455, 6 : their second, Sussex, 6 : their third, Wessex, 6 : their fourth, Essex, 6 : their fifth, East Anglia, 7 : their sixth, Mercia, 7 : their seventh, Northumberland, 7.

Schoolmaster, miraculously punished with lameness, for maltreating his scholars, and healed at the tomb of St. Ermenylde at Ely, 84.

Sciences. The seven, 134. There were formerly supposed to be seven liberal sciences. Grammar, Logic, Rhetoric, Arithmetic, Geometry, Astronomy, Music.

Sea, Red, passage of, worked in arras, 60.

Secular priests expelled from monasteries, 177 : from Chester monastery, 183, 185.

Sees removed from boroughs to the chief town of the Diocese, 181.

Sequens, 197, et seq. see Glossary.

Sexburge, daughter of Anna, King of East England, 13, 69, 74. Wife of Ercombert, King of Kent, 12, 13, 15, 22, 23, 76 : grandmother of St. Werburge, 12, 13, 74 : character, 75, 77 : history of, 74 : sister of St. Audry, 74, instructs her husband, 77 : destroys idols, 77 : founds monasteries, 77 : retires to Shepay monastery, 78 : built by her, 78 : elected Abbess, 78 : warned by an angel, resigns, 78 : removes to Ely, 78 : succeeds Audry as Abbess, 79, 80.

Sexwulfus or Saxulf, Bp. of Lichfield, 676, 93.

Shepay monastery, built by Sexburge, 78.

Shorpthursday, Maundy Thursday, in passion week, 111. This day was also called Shere Thursday because "people would that day shere their hedes." Shorp may therefore perhaps be a misprint of Shorn.

Shrewsbury, 7: repaired by Elflede, daughter of Alfred, 518.
Shrine of St. Werburge, 143: brought to Chester, 143 A.D. 875, 153: ceremony of its reception, 144: placed in the mother church of St. Peter and St. Paul, 153. Cures performed at it, 154. Offerings made there, 154: visited by King Edgar, 179: brought upon the walls to defeat besiegers, 160: strikes them with blindness, 160: brought to the north gate to defeat the Danes and Scots, 163: smites with madness and death a soldier who struck it with a stone, 163. Extinguishes a great fire at Chester, 196.
Simon, monk of Chester, 185: high character, 185: oppressed by his brethren, taught patience by a vision of St. Werburge, 185.
Skelton, poet laureate, 209.
Solomon, pourtrayed in arras, 61.
Southsex, Kingdom of, the second of the Heptarchy, established by Adla and Ella, 6: endured but short time, 6.
Stafford repaired by Elflede, daughter of Alfred, 158.
Star, a streming sterre and a dove appeared at Chester to put out a great fire, 196.
Stations, appointed places or chapels to pray at, 90, 92.
Stephen, St. performed miracles when alive, but raised no dead, till after the resolving of his blessed body, 130: inferior to St. Werburge, 130.
Stone in Staffordshire, sometime residence of Wulfer King of Mercia, and probable birth-place of Werburge, 26. Priory founded by Wulfer in honour of his murdered sons, Wulfade and Ruffyn, 50. A mercate towne which having the beginning in the Saxons' time, tooke that of the stones that our ancestors after a solemn sort had cast on a heape to notifie the place where Wolphar that heathenish King of the Mercians most cruelly slew his two sonnes Wulfald and Ruffin, because they had taken upon them the profession of Christianity in which place when Posterity in memorial of them had consecrated a little church, straight wayes there came and grew up a towne, which of those stones had the name of Stone given unto it. Camden.
Stow, 103. Stowe-nine-churches, near Bugbrook in the deanery of Daventry, Northamptonshire; the name is accounted for by the supposition of its having had so many churches belonging to it.
Strenyshalt, original name of Whitby, 19.
Suffolk, subject to Offa, 7.
Sussex, second kingdom of the Heptarchy, endured but short time, 6.
Sygebert, of East England, subdued by Penda, 17.
Tamysmouth, or, Mouth of the Thames, Danish invasion there, A.D. 851, 139, 140.
Tenures, statement of various tenures by which land was held under the Abbey of St. Werburge, 200.
Tapestry, or Arras, pictures upon, described, 59, & seq.
Thames River. South of Mercia, 8.
Theodorus, Archbishop, 21, 78: recommends Cedda to Bishopric of Lichfield, 21.
Thomwort, repaired by Elflede daughter of Alfred, 158.
Thursday before Easter called Shorpthursday, 111.
Tombert of East England, 70: marries Audry, 71: gives Ely as dower, 71.
Translation of body of St. Werburge, 11, 124: ceremony of, 125.
Trentam monastery, 86, 108, 114: built and endowed by Werburge, 86: under

her rule, 122 : she dies there, 108, 123 : destroyed by the Danes, 142. It was of the order of St. Augustin and dedicated to St. Mary and All Saints. The convent watch the body of St. Werburge, and close fast their doors to prevent it being carried as she had desired to Hambury: they are struck with deep sleep while those of Hambury carry away the body, 118, 119.

Tubal and Tubalcain, inventors of Music, pourtrayed on arras, 59.

Tynmouth Abbey destroyed by the Danes, 139.

Tytylus, King of East England, 13 : ancestor to Werburge, 13.

Ulminus, canon of Chester, miraculously cured of a broken leg by St. Werburge, 173.

Unction, extreme, administered to Werburge, 113.

Upton, a parke, a prebend of Chester, 171 : horses miraculously prevented from destroying crops there, 172. Upton is a township in that part of St. Mary on the Hill, Chester, which is in the lower division of the hundred of Broxton, and is about two miles from that city.

Vanity, exhortation against, 67.

Vecta, see Isle of Wight, subdued by Wulfer, 20.

Vincent, St., in arras, 61.

Virgin Mary, in arras, 61 : floure of femynyte, 61 : chief president of virgins, 62.

Virgins represented in arras, crowned with lilies, 62 : or roses, for their great victory, 62.

Vita patrum, read by Werburge, 96.

Vortiger invites Hengist to assist him in his defence, 6.

Wales, Britons driven thither, A. D. 689, 6 : divided from England by Offa's Dyke, 10.

Warwick, repaired by Elflede, daughter of Alfred. 158.

Warwick, Guy, Earl of, kills Colbrond the giant, 176.

Wedon, the King's mansion in Northamptonshire, 97 : converted into a nunnery by Werburge, 86 : under the authority of Werburge, 122 : her chief residence, 123 : injured by flights of wild geese, which are therefore miraculously pounded there, 97 : protected from their future depredations, 99, 100 : many miracles there, 123, 159 : destroyed by the Danes, 142.

Weest party of Mercia, i. e. Cheshire, 9.

Westmarches oppressed by the Danes, 142.

Wenedocie, name of Caerleon, Bishopric of all South Wales, 147.

Wenefrede, St., in arras, 62.

Wenlecence founded by Leofric Earl of Chester, 180.

Werbode, 32, 33 : chief steward of Wulfer, 33 : beguiles Wulfer, 33 : sues him for Werburge, 34 : severely reproved by Ermenylde, 35 : by Werburge, 37 : by Wulfade and Ruffyn, 38, 39 : plots against them and betrays their conversion to Christianity, 43, 44 : and procures their death, 46 : tormented by remorse his armes and handes he did horribly tere ; till his filthy soul compelled sore was for to expire, 46.

Werburge, account of, 4 : called, but rather incorrectly, Prioress of Chester Abbey, 4 : protectress of city and Abby of Chester, 4 : shrine of, at Chester, 4 : parentage, 7, 26 : genealogy, 10 : descended from four kings, 10, 135 : her body translated to a shrine, 11 : Mercian descent, 10 : Northumbrian descent, 12 : East An-

glian descent 12 : Kentish descent, 14 : born probably near Stone in Staffordshire, 26 : character in youth, 26, 135 : piety and devotions, 28, 29 : attendance on the daily service, 28 : sought in marriage, 29 : description, 29, 30 : sued by Prince of West Saxons, 30 : refuses him, declaring her preference for a recluse life, 32 : by Werbode, 34 : religious character, 50 : desires permission from her father to become a recluse at Ely, 51, 55, : declines marriage, 32, 51, 54 : proceeds in great state to Ely, 56 : reception there, 57 : full account of the solemn festival upon her "ghostly spousage," 58 : profession at Ely, 65, 73, 122 : miraculous powers, 68, 135 : professes after St. Benettes rule, 73 : miraculous testimonies of her piety, 85 : made president of all monasteries in the realm, 85, 93, 135 : builds and endows Trentam and Hambury monasteries, 86 : converts Wedon Manor into a nunnery, 86 : consecrated Abbess, 93 : quits Ely, 93 : description of her government, 93 : never wore linnen, 94 : daily devotions, 95 : abstinence, 95 : miracles, 96, 97, 105, 130 : impounds wild geese, 97 : restores to life one already roasted and eaten, 100 : punishes her bailiff for maltreating a servant, but finally recovers him, 101, 102 : hangs her veil on a sunbeam to preserve herself from offered violence, 103 : saves herself in an oak tree, 104 : cures all manner of diseases, 105 : gifted with prophecy, 106 : foreknows her death, 106 : and place of burial, 107 : orders all her monasteries, 107 : directs her body to be buried at Hambury, 108 : prays for miraculous powers after death, 113 : dies at Trentham, 108 : 3 Feb., A. D. 700, 115, 118 : exhorts her sisterhood, 109, 111 : last sacrament and prayer, 110 : extreme unction, 113 : transported by angels to heaven, 115 : exempt from purgatory, 115 : sweet odours arise from her body, 116, 125, 126 : funeral ceremonies, 116, 118 : lamentations over, 117 : body removed from Trentham to Hambury during miraculous sleep of the watchers, 119 : buried in chancel of Hambury, 120, 138, 142 : miracles performed at her tomb, 120, 124, 127, 159 : resided chiefly at Wedon, 123 : deemed a mediatrix, 123, 131 : her body kept hole and sound, 123, 125, 131 : for 200 years, 142 : translated, 128 : i. e. removed from her grave to a shrine, 22nd July, 708, nine years after burial, 11, 124, 125, 126, 136 : enshrined, 127 : tomb at Hambury, 127 : her body, 200 years after her death, voluntarily resolved itself to dust to save it from pollution by the Danes, 129, 142 : remission of sin to all for whom she maketh intercession, 130, 145 : shrine brought to Chester, 131, 143, 146, A.D. 875, 147 : saves Chester from enemies, 137 : fire, 137 : plague, 137 : invoked "this warke to amende," 138 : her body magnified with miracles next our Ladie, 143 : received at Chester in great pomp and song of welcome, 144 : Chester Minster founded in her honour, 155, 156, 183 : her shrine placed in the church then called St. Peter and St. Paul, 153 : great offerings made there, 145 : secular canons, prebends, &c. established therein, 156 : cures a woman thrice of lameness, 161 : a lady of barrenness, 164 : a woman of insanity, 165 : another of blindness, 167 : cures six halt blind and lame and many others, 168 : restores twice to life a man hanged unjustly, 170 : preserves corn and fruit from wild horses, 171 : cures a broken leg, 173 : appears

to an oppressed monk named Simon to preach patience, 186 : parts the Dee, for the army to pass through, 189 : appears at the monastery of Chester to announce the shipwreck of Richard Earl of Chester, 193 : her shrine quenches fire at Chester, 196 : her miracles recapitulated, 199, &c. : next in honour to "our Saviour and his mother Marie," 199 : prayer or hymn, 205.

Werburge, some of the eulogistic titles ascribed to her. Spouse of our Lord Jhesu, 4 : blessed saint, 4 : noble princess, 4, 10 : virgin pure and glorious, 4, 7, 10 : holy monyall, 4. Abbess gracious, 4. Prioress of Chester, 4. Protectress of the city and monastery, 4 : daughter of Sion, 10. Flower of virtue, 10 : sweet flower of chastity, 12 : noble margarite, 16 : rose of paradise, 16 : gemme of holynes, 16 : star of our clearness. 16.

Werburge, St., Abbey reorganised A. D. 1093, by Anselm, Abbot of Bec, at the request of Hugh Lupus, secular priests and canons displaced, religious monks substituted, and Richard, a monk of Bec in Normandy, ordained first Abbot, 183, 185. This foundation confirmed by William Rufus, who also endowed it with many privileges, making it as free as the "Earl was in his castle," 184 : presented by Hugh Lupus with many "riall rich enormentes :" and "a librarie of bokes, some remayne within the sayd monastery to this day certayne, 184 : enfranchised 101 years before the city, 185.

Westmariland, or Westmoreland, so called from Marius, 148 : who took it from Reodric the King, 148.

West Saxons, third kingdom of heptarchy, first King, Cerdicus, A. D. 521, 6 : chief cities, Winchester and Salisbury, 6 : Prince of, sues in vain the hand of Werburge, 31.

Whitby Abbey, founded by St. Hylda, 12 : originally called Strenyshalt, 19 : endowed by Oswy, King of Northumberland, with twelve possessions to build a monastery, 19.

William the Conqueror, fought the battle of Hastings, 13 Oct., 1066, 181 : crowned in London, 181 ; causes of his invasion, 181.

William Rufus, 182 : confirms foundation of St. Werburge's Abbey, 184 : and endows it with many privileges, 184.

William, son of Nigell, constable of Chester goes to rescue Earl Richard from the Welch, 188 : marches his troops dryshod through the Dee, 189 : gives the village of Newton to St. Werburge's Monastery, 189 : and founds Norton Abbey as a memorial of the miracle, 189.

William of Malmsbury, 5, 81, 88, 100, 179.

Winchester, a principal city of the West Saxons, 6.

Wirall, oppressed by inroads, 171 : miraculously preserved, 172.

Withburge of East Englande, great aunt to Werburge, 13, 69.

Woden, common progenitor of many kings, 14, 16 : Fifteenth from Noah, through Shem, 14.

Worcester, Bishopric, 21.

Wulfade, brother of Werburge, 12, 26, 35, 37 : martyr, 26 : delighted in hunting, 40 : converted by St. Cead, 41, 42 ; baptized, 42 : reprimands Werbode for seeking Werburge in marriage, 38 : betrayed and slandered by Werbode, 44, 45 : slain by his father, Wulfer, as a convert to Christianity, 46.

Wulfer, father of St. Werburge, King of Mercia, 7 : son of Penda, 11 17 ;

married Ermenylde, princess of Kent, 11, 16, 17, 22, 24: marriage solemnity, 24: his family, 11, 12: secreted for safety by the Mercians, 19: crowned King, 19, 20: baptised by Bishops Finanus and Jerumannus, 20, 33: destroys idols, 20, 25, 33: introduces christianity, 20: character, 20, 21, 22, 24, 25: conquers Kenwalrus, King of West Saxons at Ashdum, 20: subdues the Isle of Wyght, 20: gives it to King of East England on condition of baptism, 20. Godfather to him, 21: founded Lyndesy near Lincoln for fifty monks, 21: professes attachment to christianity, 25, 33: unites Mercia and Kent, 25: resided sometime at Stone, 26: for a time apostasized, 33: slays his sons Wulfade and Ruffyn as converts to Christianity, 46: laments his apostacy and cruelty, 47: by advice of his Queen Ermenylde seeks St. Cead, 48: prevented by glorious light from seeing the mass, 48: penance and conversion 49: destroys idols, founded monasteries, 49: founds Peterborow Abbey, 49. Stone Priory, 50: urges Werburge to marry, 51: but accedes to her wish to become a recluse at Ely, 55. Summons his nobles and lords to conduct her in state to Ely, 56. Procession and reception, 56, 57: "made a royal feast as custome is of maryage" at her "ghostly marriage," 58: full description of the feast, company, ceremony, decorations, 58, &c.: dies 79: buried at Lichfield, 79.

Wybba, King of Mercia, ancestor to Werburge, 11, 16.

Wyght, Isle of, or Vecta subdued by Wulfer, 20: given to King of East England, 20: oppressed by the Danes, 142.

Wylfryde, Archbishop of York, 91: professes St. Audry at Canwood, 72: her confessor, 73: deprived 73: removes to Ely, 73: assists in edifying St. John's Church, Chester, 86.

Wynwed, river near York, Battle at, 18. Penda and 30 dukes slain, 19.

York, chief city of Northumberland, 7. Battle near, between Penda and Oswy, 18: made an Archbishop's See, 150.

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